# Daily Report

# Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-056
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21 March 1996

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# Daily Report
## Central Eurasia

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**Russia: W. Chechnya: Troops Continue Operation Against Rebels**

*LD2003133796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1107 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Mar 20 (Interfax) — Russian Federal troops are continuing a large-scale operation against gunmen loyal to Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev in western Chechnya, a source at the Russian Military Command told Interfax in the Chechen capital of Groznyy.

He said the troops have sealed off the gunmen near the settlements of Bamut, Orekhovo, Stary Achkhoi and Samashki.

"In the area of Bamut, the gunmen are hiding in the underground facilities of a former intercontinental ballistic missile base," said the officer. Federal troops are conducting artillery strikes on the area.

The federal troops are forcing the gunmen into the mountains near Orekhovo, Stary Achkhoi and Samashki.

**Russia: MVD Official: Some 100 Militants Fighting in Groznyy**

*LD2103124996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1057 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, March 21 (Interfax) — There are about 100 militants actively fighting in the Chechen capital of Groznyy, a senior Russian Interior Ministry [MVD] official has reported, adding that the rebels are openly moving around by car, and shelling federal positions at night.

"The commandant's office in the central Leninsky district was shelled four times last night alone," the source said.

Federal army and local police convoys have been searching for the militants who have remained in Groznyy since early March when a raid was held on the capital. "Yet another Groznyy resident was detained last night on suspicion of collaborating with Dudayev," the source said. Dzhokar Dudayev is the head of the Chechen separatist movement.

Meanwhile, aircraft- and artillery-backed federal troops have continued to pressure the militants around Bamut, Orekhovo, Stary Achkhoy, and Samashki, in western Chechnya, where more than a thousand militants are putting up resistance.

The operation against "the Bamut grouping" has taken so long because the separatists have entrenched themselves in the reinforced silos of a former strategic missile base at Bamut, even though the base's communication lines and bunkers have been continually struck from the air, a spokesman for the federal forces in Chechnya said.

In the meantime in Chechnya's Shali and Kurchaloy areas to the southeast of Groznyy, police have completed their arms confiscation operation. That operation, unlike the one in the Achkhoy-Martan region, where the standoff is still underway, proceeded peacefully with the local population surrendering about 250 guns and with the chiefs of nine villages of these two regions signing peace accords with Groznyy and federal command officials, a spokesman for the Russian Internal Ministry Troops in Chechnya said.

In an incident at Nagornoye, a community 40 kilometers to the northwest of Groznyy, separatists opened fire on an Mi-8 internal troop helicopter, slightly wounding two servicemen, and insignificantly damaging the helicopter, the source reported.

**Russia: Federal Forces Continue Assault on Bamut**

*LD2003154396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1411 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Mar 20 (Interfax) — The leadership of Chechen separatist fighters in the Chechen town of Bamut "has lost the ability to command" under the continuing strikes of federal forces, an officer from the federal troops headquarters told Interfax Wednesday.

There was a more than 400-strong detachment of Chechen rebel troops near Bamut before the beginning of the operation, comprising part of the southwestern resistance zone under command of Ruslan Gelayev, he said. There are about 1,200 troops in this group, including 100 mercenaries armed with three tanks, six APCs and armored vehicles, grenade throwers and portable rocket launchers.

"Currently the fighters in Bamut are sustaining serious losses and have been practically cut off from their command. As a result, they are unable to coordinate their actions with the major forces of this group," he reported.

"If nothing and nobody" prevents the command from ending this operation then "the large formation of separatist fighters in Bamut and the main base of Dudayev forces in Chechnya's west will be destroyed," according to the officer.

Most Chechen separatists are believed loyal to Dzhokhar Dudayev, former President of Chechnya ousted by Russian troops in late 1994.

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Chechen villages of Samashki, Orekhovo, and Bamut. From 0800 hours the combat air force has been firing missiles at these villages. ITAR-TASS was told this over the telephone from the Achkhoy-Martan district center by Tarkhan Khadzayev, deputy head of the district administration.

"The command of the federal subunits, operating in the Samashki District promised that at 1300 hours shelling of the village would be stopped and a corridor would be provided for the civilian population to leave," Tarkhan Khadzayev said. "One hour is left before this deadline, but already now buses and cars for taking away refugees have concentrated near Samashki behind the positions of the federal forces."

Tarkhan Khadzayev said that on Wednesday "the feds kept their promise and opened a corridor for civilians; however, there was a great deal of confusion because the people's departure from the village was accompanied by massive firing on Samashki." On that same day 86 civilian residents were evacuated to the village of Novyy Sharoy nearby and the bodies of persons killed — 15 civilians and three soldiers of the federal forces.

Tarkhan Khadzayev gave an evasive answer to the question about how many civilian residents were left in Samashki: "Very many. But it is difficult to estimate exactly. It is also difficult to give the number of fatalities among civilians. Approximately 70 corpses were taken out of Samashki in the past few days, but only Allah knows how many were buried in courtyards in Samashki."

The fact that the air force and artillery has been used against the village of Bamut and Orekhovoye was confirmed today by Secretary of the Security Council of the Chechen Republic Ruslan Tsakayev. In an interview to Aleksandr Kharchenko, the ITAR-TASS correspondent in Groznyy, he said that the surroundings of the settlements of Alkhazurovo and Komsomolskoye (20 km south of Groznyy in Urus-Martan District) are also being shelled. "According to an aerial survey there are many trenches and other engineering fortifications there, built by the Dudayevites," Ruslan Tsakayev explained.

**Russia: Chechnya: Federal Tactics Increasing Chance of Escalation**

*MM2103091796 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 2*

[Report by Igor Rotar: "Samashki Village Destroyed. Russian Generals Follow Yermolov's Example"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chechnya-Ingushetia — "We are not allowing journalists into Chechnya!" servicemen on the Chechen-Ingush border told me 20 March. Strange: A state of emergency has not been declared in Chechnya, and since that is the case any Russian citizen can move freely around his state's territory.

"Listen, why are you bothering, surely you know that they don't want any witnesses THERE!" the people in military uniform finally cut short the pointless debate.

It becomes clear exactly what secrets the Russian authorities are trying to keep from the public here as soon as you get into "forbidden" territory. Thus, for example, the statement by Doku Zavgayev's press secretary printed in IZVESTIYA and elsewhere that "the village of Samashki has now been liberated by Russian troops" contrasts sharply with the facts.

Smoke hangs over the village. Russian aviation and artillery are continuing to deliver strikes against this populated area. I was in an ambulance that managed to take several wounded people through the checkpoint and out of the village. Kulsum Magomadov, a Samashki village doctor, reported: "In fact they are still wiping the village off the face of the earth. Around 10,000 peaceful inhabitants are left in Samashki, including refugees from Sernovodsk, which was destroyed by Russian troops. People are hiding from the shells in basements, fresh graves have appeared outside practically every home. We are asking the 'feds' to provide a corridor for the evacuation of peaceful inhabitants, if only for 24 hours. But we have not yet received consent. The fact that we have now been able to break through in an ambulance is a real miracle. For example, today federal troops fired on a group of women refugees from Samashki village who were trying to return to the village in order to evacuate the wounded."

Here is the story of Zabu Akhmedova, a patient at Sleptsovskaya Hospital and a refugee from Samashki village: "On 15 March Russian troops gave us a corridor for only half an hour, and most inhabitants simply did not have time to leave. On 19 March we decided to return to the village to collect our relatives. There were 74 of us women in all. In Sernovodsk we reached an agreement with Internal Troops Lieutenant Colonel Maksimov. He told us: 'All right, you can go, but bear in mind that a war is going on there and you are taking a risk. I will give you until 1630 hours.' We raised white flags and walked down the road. When we were about 2 km from the village it became evident that practically all of it was burning. We saw Russian aviation bombing our homes. The last Russian checkpoint before Samashki was on our route. Its number is 13. When we were about 400 meters away from it the military opened fire on us with grenade launchers. We started waving our white flags and shouting: 'Don't shoot!' But the shooting did

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not stop. Then we started running away. I was hit by three pieces of shrapnel. One of them broke my shoulder blade."

The current massive offensive by Russian troops along virtually the entire southern salient provides convincing evidence that, despite its rhetoric, the Kremlin has kissed goodbye to the peace plan to settle the Chechen crisis. Essentially Russian troops are now once again using General Yermolov's tactics: The militia gunmen are being forced into high mountain areas unsuitable for habitation, the adjacent mountain villages are being destroyed, and, consequently, the gunmen are being deprived of ammunition and food "supplies."

But these tactics sharply increase the likelihood of an escalation and that the armed conflict will "spill over" beyond the republic.

"Around 100,000 refugees, 40,000 of them from North Ossetia, are living in a republic with a population of around 200,000, and although three and a half years have passed repatriation has in fact not even started," IZVESTIYA was told by Magomed Yevloyev, leader of the Ingush Ministry for Emergency Situations Directorate [direktsiya]. "Since the war in Chechnya began our republic has been swamped by a new wave of refugees.... In the last few days alone we have accepted around 20,000 refugees from Sernovodsk and Samashki. We simply do not have the resources to take such a vast number of refugees. At the moment we have been forced to accommodate people in clubs and even at automobile maintenance stations. Social tension is increasing. It seems that there are forces in Russia which are doing everything to drag us into the war!"

**Russia: Mystery Shrouds Location of MVD Unit Posted in Chechnya**

*MM2103134996 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1*

[Report by Boris Sinyavskiy: "Troop Subunit Missing in Russia. Could Anyone Who Finds It Please Telephone"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kemerovo Oblast — The office received a telephone call from Nikolay Georgiyevich Rozinkin in Marinsk, who related the following story. His son Anatoliy was drafted into the army 28 February last year and arrived at his base — Rubtsovsk, Altay Kray — 2 March. His father — since it was not very far — went to the unit to see his son taking his oath. He was also introduced to unit commander Vasiliy Dmitriyevich Dronov, who accompanied Anatoliy and a 300-man battalion to Chechnya 31 July. He has had no communication with his son since that day.

Since the unit set off N. Rozinkin has received just one letter from his son, which his son, by all accounts, had carried by an officer, who was leaving for the unit's permanent base — a Rubtsovsk postmark was on the envelope. From this news his parents learned that their son was near Gudermes. That was all. Since then they have not had any spoken or written communication with him.

I told this to someone who I knew tackled these problems — A.A. Lopatin, the Kemerovo City Administration's chief specialist for mobilization work. It turned out that he had already had a letter from the Kuzbass Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, which he sent to Novosibirsk, to the headquarters of the Siberian Internal Troops District, along with a request signed by V. Pavlov, deputy head of the Kemerovo Administration, for a report on the fate of Unit 6720. A response was not long in coming:

"Due to the fact that the men of Unit 6720 have failed to arrive at their permanent base it does not appear possible to conduct an investigation into the points raised in the letter from R.A. Veyts, chairman of the Kuzbass Committee of Soldiers' Mothers. When they arrive the matter will be studied and we will provide additional information." This was signed by V.V. Vlasko, temporary acting commander of the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs Siberian Internal Troops District.

A 300-man troop unit has never disappeared before. The only thing to do is make this appeal: "Motherland in danger!" A well-equipped and well-trained illegal armed formation is wandering around the country who knows where and who knows in what direction. Anyone who meets it by chance is asked to tell the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Kuzbass Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, and Nikolay Georgiyevich Rozinkin in Marinsk, Kemerovo Oblast.

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**CIS: Ex-IPA Head Shumeyko: Duma Vote Lacks 'Seriousness'**

*MM2003162896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 2*

[Interview with Vladimir Shumeyko, former chairman of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly Council and former speaker of the Russian Federation Council, by Andrey Shcherbakov; place and date not given: "The Duma Stands Everything on Its Head"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Shcherbakov] Vladimir Filippovich [Shumeyko]! The press has repeatedly described the activities of the Interparliamentary Assembly [IPA] in seeking new ways to really integrate the republics of the former Union. Does it turn out that the Duma is now proposing to start everything all over again?

[Shumeyko] In its decree the Duma ignores not only the work experience of the Interparliamentary Assembly. It ignores the experience of international law and simply of law as such. It is ridiculous, to say the least, to rely today on the 1991 referendum. For Russia now has a qualitatively new, constitutional law on the referendum, for which a considerable proportion of those same deputies voted.

The main substance of the Interparliamentary Assembly's work was precisely the economic integration of the former republics of the Soviet Union. But you can clearly feel the influence of Soviet mentality in the Duma document. For previously we had precisely a socialist federation founded on the CPSU's absolute power. There is nothing close to the word "economy" in the decree. The Duma stands everything on its head.

What did we lose on the breakup of the Union? A market for our enterprises. The entire Soviet economy was built like the economy of a large plant, in which each republic was a shop. The republics have now become independent, sovereign states, recognized in international law. Each one is building a self-sufficient economy, and this process lasts quite a long time.

[Shcherbakov] In your view, does the Duma ignore the Interparliamentary Assembly's work experience?

[Shumeyko] In speaking of the Interparliamentary Assembly's work experience, I will mention that in the past two years it has gone over to the adoption of model legislation, when we take as the basis the best elaborated law of any CIS state, adding to it the comments of each republic with the help of Interparliamentary Assembly commissions and proposing to adopt it as a model law at the session. If this version was adopted at the Interparliamentary Assembly session, it was then submitted for examination to the parliament of the CIS member country and acquired the status of a law of that state.

We regarded the adoption of two parts of the Russian Federation Civil Code as a particular victory. For this concerns people's attitudes to property — of the state and the citizen — and the possibility of creating various enterprises. In other words, it enshrines the basis of market relations. Russia's Civil Code was adopted as a model. Civil codes that are very close to each other have now been adopted in the CIS countries — which makes it possible to integrate more closely in the economy.

So it is flippant, to say the least, to raise the point about inter-nation cooperation in the decree and to forget about the economy.

[Shcherbakov] What consequences do you think the Duma's decisions could have?

[Shumeyko] This decree can have no legal consequences. In my view, it is a question of an internal document to be circulated within the Duma. The purpose of adopting it is political — to take some actions before the presidential election. Therefore it is simply impossible to speak of its seriousness.

**CIS: Mixed Russian-Ukrainian Commission Holds First Session**

*LD2003142796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1355 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Artyom Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 20 (Itar-Tass) — The mixed Russian-Ukrainian Cooperation Commission opened its first session at the President Hotel today. The attention of the Commission will be focused on the preparation of the Russian-Ukrainian summit, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said, opening the session.

Aside from drafting a general political treaty of friendship and cooperation between the two countries, as well as a document on the Black Sea Fleet, it is necessary to prepare for the Kiev summit a number of agreements dealing with the dramatic expansion of cooperation in the economic, humanitarian and military spheres, Chernomyrdin stressed. He expressed confidence that the beginning of the work of the Commission would become another step on the way of expanding friendly relations between Russia and Ukraine.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Yevgeniy Marchuk said in his report that it was necessary to pay special attention to the customs problem, because it is hampering the development of trade and economic relations between the two countries. The Ukrainian side prepared a total of 25 issues, which should be discussed and improved.

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In his interview with Ukrainian journalists Marciuk reaffirmed that President Yeltsin was expected to come to Kiev on April 4-5, as was agreed before. Speaking about Ukraine's debt to Gazprom, he said that it amounted to 58 million dollars, of which the Azovstal steel works accounts for 26.7 million and the Ilyich works — for 24.7 million.

**CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 21 Mar**

*LD2103072896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0630 GMT 21 Mar 96*

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 21 (Itar-Tass) — Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated March 21. The press highlights the current presidential election campaign and covers in detail the visit of NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana to Moscow.

IZVESTIYA analyses Communists' statements and reality.

The newspaper carries an article which emphasises that "behind the Communists' statements about the monolithic unity of their ranks, there is a keen struggle by party leaders for power".

Already now, the newspaper observes, there are serious differences in the State Duma between the Communist Party faction staff and the Duma staff who are oriented towards Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev.

"The Communists are ready to strive for power but if they win they are unlikely to guarantee what they promise the loudest of all, namely, political stability," the newspaper concludes.

PRAVDA runs an interview with Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), who states that "to denounce the Belovezh Agreement (on the founding of a Commonwealth of Independent States) and to rectify the abnormal situation in which Soviet poeple found themselves, were the major points in our election programmes both in 1993 and 1995".

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on Grigoriy Yavlinskiy.

Under the rubric "The portrait of a presidential contender", the newspaper carries an article by political scientist Alexey Kiva about Grigoriy Yavlinskiy. The analyst is of the opinion that Yavlinskiy joined the presidential race "without an idea, which would unite society, and without an economic model which would differ from all others. Instead, something else is in abundance — what can be realised only in one's dreams".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on a "third force" electoral bloc.

The names of representatives of a mysterious "third force" which can press back both Yeltsin and Zyuganov at the elections, have at last become known, the newspaper writes.

These are Aleksandr Lebed, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, and Svyatoslav Fedorov. The latter told the newspaper that the establishment of the "third force"'s electoral bloc would be announced shortly.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on Primakov's 70 days in office.

Over the 70 days in office, new Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov "has manifested an impressive resultativeness", the newspaper points out, running an interview with him under the headline "Minister Primakov will not allow Russia to become the West's shadow".

In response to a question about his attitude to the State Duma's recent decision on the denunciation of the Belovezh Agreement, Primakov said the decision "is detrimental to Russia's interests in international relations and undermines the legal basis for the existence of our State".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the repayment of wage arrears.

The newspaper examines the course of the implementation of President Boris Yeltsin's assignment to repay wage arrears to the personnel of the budget-supported sectors.

Referring to official sources, the newspaper reports that "the process of the payment of wages and salaries has been fully restored in 32 regions of the country".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on the possibility of a new spiral in the war in Chechnya.

"Now, as we see it, the war in Chechnya is in its second round. The first one was in spring last year. At that time combat actions, before they reached their logical conclusion — the rout of unlawful armed formations — were put on hold on a command.

"A second round began a month or two later: again to dislodge militants from populated areas where they returned upon availing themselves of the given respite".

The newspaper wonders whether a third round is on the cards. it may be brought on by yet another suspension of combat actions on the eve of the presidential elections.

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"It is understandable that the polling stations are unlikely to open in the event of ongoing combat operations in the Chechen Republic. The probability that the crisis will be resolved by peaceful means prior to the elections is negligibly small," the newspaper believes.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on NATO chief's visit to Moscow.

The newspaper carries an article headlined "What are Solana's plans" by Grigoriy Karasin, Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department of Information and the Press.

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**Russia: NATO Chief on Russia Relationship, Bosnia, Enlargement, PFP**

*MM2003124896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 7*

[Interview with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana by Viktor Onuchko in Brussels; date not specified: "Javier Solana: NATO Wants To Cooperate With Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] NATO Secretary General Javier Solana has arrived in Moscow on an official visit. We are publishing an interview which J. Solana gave to your RIA NOVOSTI correspondent just beforehand in Brussels specially for ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA.

[Onuchko] How do you assess the first results of the Russian troops' participation in the international peacekeeping operations being conducted in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Solana] Relations between the NATO and Russian militaries have been excellent from the very outset. A substantial contingent of Russian troops started operating as part of the international forces as of 1 February 1996. Operating side by side with U.S. units, the Russian officers and men are carrying out their tasks willingly, with a keen sense of duty, and at a high professional level.

[Onuchko] At the Conference of NATO Defense Ministers and the Russian Defense Minister (16+1), held 28 November 1995, and at the Council of the North Atlantic Alliance sitting 6 December 1995, the Russian representatives submitted proposals on the creation of a security system in Europe. What is NATO's stance in respect of these proposals?

[Solana] We are firmly convinced that European security requires a composite approach, whereby various organizations would carry out complementary roles, using their own possibilities and advantages. NATO, the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe], and other organizations are playing a fundamental role in solving the numerous problems which have recently been emerging in the sphere of security in Europe. It is not in NATO's interests to prevent other multilateral organizations from playing an important role in Europe.

[Onuchko] Will the possible expansion of NATO not lead to a new division of Europe?

[Solana] There is no need for anyone either in Russia or in any other state to fear anything in connection with the expansion of NATO. Our alliance is and will continue to be a defensive alliance, and we are looking at its expansion within the framework of a thought-out, gradual, and open approach to the problem. Its expansion will strengthen security throughout Europe and it will not create any new dividing lines. It should not be forgotten that the expansion of NATO will occur within the context of the continuing development of the OSCE, the European Union, and other organizations.

The expansion of NATO must not be seen in the light of an outdated game in which the success of one player meant the failure of the other.

[Onuchko] You said that one of your tasks is transforming NATO into a structure of security for Europe. In this connection, what role is "Partnership for Peace" supposed to play? And how do you see cooperation with Russia in this connection?

[Solana] We see "Partnership for Peace" and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council as permanent complementary elements of the comprehensive, universal, and constantly developing system of European security whose idea NATO is aiming to put into effect.

The specific advantages of "Partnership" and the creation by our partners of forces which are even better trained for conducting joint operations with NATO forces have been graphically demonstrated by the effective contribution made by Russia and certain other participants in "Partnership" within the framework of the operation of the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

However, it is obvious that cooperation between NATO and Russia has far greater potential. I hope that my visit to Moscow will help advance this process.

**Russia: Cooperation Agreement Signed With NATO's Solana**

*LD2003133196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1107 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 20 (Interfax) — NATO's Secretary-General Javier Solana, who is in Moscow on an official visit, and Russia's Minister for Emergency Situations Sergey Shoigu Wednesday signed a memorandum on cooperation in planning for civil emergencies and readiness for emergency situations.

From now on, the Russian Ministry and NATO will notify one another of emergency situations and analyze them in order to lessen the aftermath. The document emphasizes the United Nations' leading role in carrying out international operations to deal with the consequences of accidents and natural disasters and in extending humanitarian aid to the victims.

The sides are also planning to organize seminars and exercises. Special emphasis was placed on the drafting of documents on the transportation of cargo and the

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procedure of crossing the border and going through customs.

The sides have also agreed that Russia will host a session of NATO's Committee for Civil Emergency Planning, involving the Partnership for Peace program's member-states.

**Russia: Grachev, NATO's Solana Discuss NATO Expansion**

*LD2003180396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 20 (Interfax) — Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana are discussing issues of European security, prospects of NATO's enlargement, and Russia's participation in the Partnership for Peace program in Moscow Wednesday.

Issues on military-technical cooperation between Russia and NATO and the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina were also included in the agenda of their meeting on the proposal of the Russian defense minister, according to Interfax.

"More close forms of cooperation will be found with your taking the office of secretary general," Grachev told Solana.

Solana said that he wanted to underline the significance NATO attracts to cooperation with Russia.

He was greatly impressed by "the skilled and coordinated interaction" between the Russian and NATO contingents within the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Solana said. "If we were able to establish cooperation there (Bosnia and Herzegovina — IF) then it will be easier to do this in other spheres," he said.

To this effect Grachev told his guest: "Thus you have understood that it is not worth enlarging NATO eastward given our close cooperation."

**Russia: Grachev Notes Existing Differences With NATO on Expansion**

*LD2003183496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1759 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By Mikhail Shevtsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev on Wednesday said Russia and NATO had different visions of the NATO's eastward expansion.

"So far, we have had different approaches to NATO's expansion," Grachev said at the end of his meeting with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana.

Grachev and Solana discussed European security, NATO's enlargement, Russia's participation in the Partnership for Peace programme, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Russia's military and scientific cooperation with the Alliance.

This was Grachev's first meeting with Solana as NATO's Secretary General. The Russian minister said Solana was ready to announce NATO's programme for closer cooperation with Russia.

The two leaders reached a principal agreement on Russia having permanent representatives in Mons (Belgium) where NATO's military headquarters are situated.

According to Solana, it was the first meeting they had exchanged opinions in a frank manner on NATO's enlargement and its cooperation with Russia. Solana hoped for dialogue to go on.

**Russia: Solana Says NATO To Expand Regardless of Duma, Elections**

*LD2003185396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1758 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Interfax) — Neither the results of Russia's presidential elections nor the Duma resolution effectively re-establishing the USSR will have any effect on NATO's expansion plans, NATO General Secretary Javier Solana said Wednesday.

"The decision to expand NATO was taken in 1994 and will be carried out regardless of circumstances, be they Duma resolutions or Russia's presidential election results," Solana told Interfax in an exclusive interview at the agency's central office in Moscow.

The Duma resolutions "not only have no legal force, but are also unwise in a psychological sense," he said. "They can in no way be called positive."

Solana hopes that cooperation between NATO and Russia will develop regardless of who wins the upcoming presidential elections. "This is crucial for the stability and safety of Europe," he said.

As for Russia's next president, NATO will judge him by his deeds, not his words, Solana said.

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**Russia: Yeltsin Presents 'Firmer' Stand to NATO's Solana**

*LD2103122796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1220 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — Russia's relations with NATO and, mainly, the problem of NATO's possible eastward enlargement were the main things discussed during a meeting in the Kremlin on Thursday between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana.

Opening the meeting, the Russian President expressed the hope that the NATO Secretary-General had an opportunity for a detailled talk with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov. (The Kremlin meeting was preceded by prolonged talks between the NATO Secretary-General and the Russian Foreign Minister — correspondent.)

Regarding the negotiations between Solana and Primakov, Yeltsin said that the Russian minister hardly left him any time at all, "but, they say, he was too mild speaking with you, so I shall set out my stand firmer".

Presidential Press Secretary Sergey Medvedev told a briefing in the Kremlin on Thursday morning that during the meeting with Solana the Russian President intended once again to set out Russia's stand regarding NATO's eastward expansion.

"Russia wishes that new dividing lines should not be laid out in Europe, that there should be no return to the outdated policy of blocs, but, instead, that a comprehensive European security system be created by joint efforts," Medvedev said. Solana, apparently, would try again to set out NATO's stand envisaging the inclusion of a number of east European countries into the North Atlantic alliance, Medvedev said.

**Russia: NATO's Solana Comments on Eastward Expansion**

*LD2003170496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1411 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 20 (Interfax) — The French model of admission to the NATO political system without entry into the military system is not acceptable as a compromise in NATO eastward expansion, NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana told Interfax in an exclusive interview Wednesday.

"The question of a certain NATO-Russian compromise in NATO eastward expansion has not been raised at all," said the official when visiting the Interfax Moscow office.

Central and Eastern European nations wishing to join NATO are sovereign states striving for fully-fledged membership in the alliance, he said. "They want to become members of a community of democratic and peaceful countries. This is their wish and their right," he stressed.

Plans for NATO expansion are not directed against Russia, said Solana.

"The alliance wants broad and close relations with Russia. They are the guarantors of peace and stability in Europe," said the NATO leader.

The alliance has changed a lot and acquired new tasks, including those in peace-making, said Solana.

"Bosnia, where NATO and Russian peace-makers are working together, is an example of the friendship between us," he said. Last week the official visited Russian servicemen stationed in the Posavina corridor.

The best proof of the changes in NATO are the reduced numbers of NATO troops in Europe, Solana said. "Over the past years the alliance army has been cut by 25 percent, the American troops in Europe have been reduced by 60 percent and the nuclear forces have been cut by 80 percent," he said.

The NATO leader noted that changes in the Russian Armed Forces are lagging behind the aforesaid changes in the alliance.

He doubts these facts are known by the Russian public.

"Russian objections to the alliance's expansion are emotional rather than grounded," he said.

**Russia: Yeltsin Reaffirms Territorial Dispute in Meeting With Ikeda**

*OW2003123096 Tokyo KYODO in English 1209 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, March 20 KYODO — President Boris Yeltsin reaffirmed Wednesday [20 March] his 1993 statement acknowledging the existence of a territorial dispute with Japan over four islands off Japan's main northern island of Hokkaido, Japanese officials said.

Yeltsin made the remark when he met with Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda for about 30 minutes, they said.

In the Tokyo declaration issued when Yeltsin visited Japan in October 1993, Tokyo and Moscow agreed to seek a solution to the territorial dispute based on the principles of "law and justice."

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Ikeda presented to Yeltsin a message from Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto supporting the Russian president for maintaining his reform policy ahead of a June presidential election and promoting bilateral relations on the basis of the Tokyo declaration, the officials said.

In the message, Hashimoto expresses hope that he will have a substantial meeting with Yeltsin when he visits Moscow in April for an international meeting on nuclear safety, they said.

"What is important is to fully develop bilateral relations in good neighborly friendship on the basis of reality," Yeltsin was quoted as telling Ikeda.

Yeltsin praised ongoing negotiations over safe fishing near the disputed islands as a positive movement between the two countries.

"History is moving in the direction of signing a peace treaty," Yeltsin was quoted as saying.

The dispute over the islands, known as the Northern Territories in Japan and southern Kurils in Russia, has prevented the two countries from signing a peace treaty to formally end World War II hostilities.

The four islands — Kunashiri, Etorofu and Shikotan Islands and the Habomai group of islets — were seized by invading Soviet troops during the closing days of the war.

On other topics at the Yeltsin-Ikeda meeting, the president asked for Japanese support in making Russia a formal member of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialized nations.

Ikeda replied that he will discuss the matter with other G-7 nations — Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the United States.

Ikeda arrived in Moscow on Wednesday for a two-day visit for talks with Russian leaders in preparation for the Yeltsin-Hashimoto meeting in April in Moscow.

**Russia: Yeltsin Receives, Confers With Japan's Ikeda**

*LD2003180096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 20 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin Wednesday received Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda, who is in Moscow for an official visit.

"We have not met for a long time. It's time we synchronized our positions. There are quite a few problems to be discussed," Yeltsin said when greeting Ikeda.

Yeltsin also said that he attached great importance to Moscow's relations with Tokyo. "Russia welcomes an active political dialogue with Japan," he said.

Besides bilateral relations, Yeltsin and Ikeda will discuss preparations for the G-8 April summit on nuclear security to be held in Moscow, presidential press secretary Sergey Medvedev announced during a briefing in the Kremlin.

The sides are also discussing preparations for Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's visit to Russia, he said.

Yeltsin is to meet with the Chairman of the Muslim Board of Russia and the CIS's European countries, Supreme Mufti Tadzhuddin, Medvedev announced.

President Yeltsin attaches great importance to this meeting, said Medvedev. The talks are likely to deal with cooperation between Russia's Muslim organizations and executive and legislative authorities, he went on to say. Tadzhuddin is expected to inform Yeltsin of the Muslim confession's role in the life of the country, he added.

The problem of settling the Chechen conflict may also be raised, he continued. He said Tadzhuddin was likely to propose to Yeltsin his idea of setting up an enlarged conciliatory commission for the Chechen settlement, involving influential religious leaders.

Yeltsin also is to meet with a group of political scientists, researchers and public figures on March 20 to discuss the current situation and the political consequences of the State Duma's latest decisions, including its vote denouncing the 1991 Belovezhye Accords, which disbanded the USSR and founded the CIS.

**Russia: Yeltsin: Moscow Counts on Japanese Support To Join G-7**

*LD2003195396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Interfax) - Russia counts on Japan's supporting its intention to become a full-fledged member of the "Group of Seven" leading industrialized nations with the latter's transformation into a "group of eight," Russian President Boris Yeltsin said at a meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda, according to a Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Ken Shimanouchi.

Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto will be notified of Yeltsin's request, Shimanouchi told a briefing in Moscow Wednesday. "Tokyo will consider it, but the issue will be resolved through consultations with other members of the Group of Seven," he said.

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Ikeda handed Yeltsin a personal message of Hashimoto, the spokesman said. According to Shimanouchi, the prime minister in particular said that he planned to hold talks with the Russian president during his visit to Moscow for the Group of Seven summit on nuclear safety. "He also confirmed support for Russian reforms and spoke out in favor of developing bilateral relations on the basis of the Tokyo Declaration," Shimanouchi said.

"Japan will continue to support Russian reforms for as long as their implementation continues," Shimanouchi said.

"As the Japanese Foreign Minister told the Russian President, these reforms are already bearing fruit," Shimanouchi said.

In terms of aid to Russia by the Group of Seven countries, Japan is behind only the United States and Germany, Shimanouchi said, claiming that Japanese aid to Russia "stands at $4.4 billion."

**Russia: Japan's Ikeda Says Visit To Benefit Both Countries**

*LD2003164396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1623 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By Vladimir Kutakhov and Andrey Varlamov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda said his talks in Moscow were very good and expressed the hope that they will benefit both countries.

In an interview with Itar-Tass on Wednesday before flying home after his two-day official visit to Russia, Ikeda said he valued Russia's efforts to carry out democratic reform and its results.

The minister confirmed that Tokyo is ready to provide assistance to Russian reform when, and if, possible.

Speaking after the first session of the Russian-Japanese intergovernmental commission for trade and scientific cooperation, Ikeda said Russia and Japan, as countries which bear a certain share of responsibility to the international community, should cooperate and the commission's meeting was an important step on the path of cooperation.

**Russia: Agreement With Japan on Loans, Economic Cooperation**

*LD2003164196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1459 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko, Andrey Varlamov and Andrey Kirillov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russia and Japan have agreed in principle on the use of the 500-million loan extended by Tokyo to Moscow earlier, Russia's First Vice-Premier Oleg Soskovets said after the first meeting here today of the Russo-Japanese inter-governmental commission for trade and economic cooperation.

According to Soskovets, the negotiators reached an agreement to transfer part of the loan to the development of investment projects in Russia's Far eastern region.

Responding to a question from Itar-Tass, Soskovets stressed that Japan had taken into account the Russian wishes for the use of the loan expressed in a message sent to the Japanese leadership in the middle of March.

Soskovets stressed that Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda and the Japanese side as a whole were constructive in their approach to the Russian proposal for cooperation in the field of conversion of defence enterprises to civilian production.

Soskovets said it was necessary "to discuss with Japan a question of a new, 2-billion-dollar investment loan on general terms, without specifying sectors or regions targeted."

The First Vice-Premier told the Japanese negotiators that it was "inadvisable to condition the signing of specific agreements under the 500-million loan on the completion of work to use up the 400-million credit line."

He urged the Japanese Government "to consider the possibility of including one other project in the humanitarian credit line, the purchase of plant and equipment for the production of large tyres at AO Supershina in Krasnoyarsk." The project's estimated cost is 68 million dollars.

According to the First Vice-Premier, the scientific and technical sphere offers extensive opportunities for Russo-Japanese cooperation. He said in particular that the Russian side was pleased with Japan's intention to step up contacts in the use of space and seismology.

Soskovets said a number of problems were still impeding trade and economic cooperation between the two countries and drew the attention of Japan to the need

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"to sign an agreement on provisional protection of capital investments."

Soskovets stressed that Russia was set to develop comprehensive relations with Japan in the spirit of good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation on the basis of the Tokyo declaration and some other documents signed during Boris Yeltsin's visit to Japan in 1993.

**Russia: Federation Council: Moscow To Build Relations With Cuba**

*LD2003213296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1758 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 20 (Interfax) - The Federation Council confirms that Russia intends to build its further relations with Cuba bearing in mind Russia's national, primarily economic, interests, says a statement of the Federation Council adopted at its Wednesday session due to the approval of the bill On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity with Cuba by the U.S. congress.

The document adopted by the American Congress provides for toughening of the embargo against Cuba and the utilization of sanctions against states, organizations and people supporting trade-economic relations with Havana.

The anti-Cuba campaign launched by the United States "does not promote the normalization of the situation in this region," says the Federation Council statement. Members of the Federation Council view this bill as in "contradiction of the general norms of international law and rules of international trade."

"The majority of states of the world community regard the embargo with respect to Cuba and measures on its toughening as an infringement of the rights of sovereign states for free development of trade-economic cooperation with other states," the statement says.

The Federation Council noted that the U.S. side would take into consideration the concern attributed to the adoption of the bill On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity with Cuba and "will treat the issue on concrete implementation of provisions of this document, primarily those directly affecting Russia's interests, with a special wariness."

Relations between Washington and Havana were sharpened due to the recent air incident near the Cuban coast, when aircraft from the Cuban Air Force brought down two civil aircraft from the United States belonging to the organization of Cuban emigrants.

**Russia: Federation Council Concerned Over U.S. Anti-Cuban Campaign**

*LD2003130796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1234 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By Lyudmila Yermakova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian Federation Council has adopted a statement today in connection with the bill "On freedom and democratic solidarity with Cuba" adopted in the United States.

The upper chamber of the Russian parliament believes that "an anti-Cuban campaign launched in the United States does not promote the normalization of the situation in this region and confirms that in future, Russia intends to develop its relations with Cuba, proceeding from Russia's own national interests, predominantly, of an economic character."

The Federation Council reminded of the fact that on March 12, the U.S. president, in contravention of his former position, signed an anti-Cuban bill adopted by the Congress "on freedom and democratic solidarity with Cuba" (the so-called Helms-Burton law). Russian lawmakers believe that the approval of this document, which envisages tightening embargo against Cuba and imposing sanctions on states maintaining trade and economic relations with Cuba, is accounted for by the deterioration of the U.S.-Cuban relations.

The Federation Council announced last October that the Helms-Burton draft bill "runs counter to generally recognized norms of international law and the rules of international trade."

**Russia: Initial U.S. Reactions to 'USSR' Vote Viewed**

*MM2003152496 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 3*

[Report by Vladimir Shelkov: "Washington's Confusion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington — The resolution passed by the Russian State Duma Friday (15 March) declaring the Belovezhskaya documents on the Soviet Union's disbandment invalid have so far not been commented on at all by the U.S. Administration's most senior representatives. One gets the impression that official Washington decided to take advantage of a legitimate "time-out" — the upcoming weekend — and did so with a certain amount of relief, insofar as the Duma's step took it by surprise. Although people here have long been writing and saying that the opposition parties, which obtained a majority of seats in the Russian

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parliament, are making no secret of their intention to raise the question of the possible voluntary unification of former USSR republics.

On Saturday and Sunday in the heart of the U.S. Administration the mechanism for studying and "chewing over" the decisions made in Moscow from all angles was certainly working flat out and consultations were held with the aim of determining their possible consequences and finding the most acceptable options for Washington's reaction. Possibly the results of these discussions behind closed doors will become known this week in one way or another. But right now one thing is quite clear: Any steps leading to the restoration of any semblance of the Union — not the stillborn CIS but a more viable and effective structure — cannot arouse enthusiasm across the ocean.

In this context what comes to mind is the viewpoint of, for example, U.S. State Department Spokesman N. Burns, who not so long ago described the proposals to reestablish the USSR made during the preelection parliamentary debates in Russia as "a bad idea." And here is completely new confirmation of the conclusion that Washington does not welcome the Duma resolution. J. Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, took part in the Saturday broadcast of CNN's "Evans and Novak." When asked for his reaction to the idea supported by Russian parliamentarians of the possible reestablishment of the USSR, without bothering with suitably cautious references to the fact that the subject under discussion comes under the category of Russia's internal affairs, the senator replied as follows: "I fear the potential catastrophe which is latent in Russia — that part of the former Soviet Union. We (the United States — V. Sh.) have made some mistakes there."

Now, while things have not yet reached the stage of serious commentaries on the Duma's decision, the U.S. press is reporting it fairly widely. It might even seem to the uninitiated that everything has already been decided in Russia, that any day now the Union will reappear on the political maps of the world as a giant red area. Incidentally, it cannot be ruled out that some people in America would like to frighten the gullible public here with this red rag. Look, they are saying, the Communists are desperate for power again. Along with them not only the Union but also the "Soviet threat" will be revived and U.S. national interests will be undermined.

One of the few examples of a considered assessment is provided by an article published by the WASHINGTON POST newspaper prior to the Duma vote. "There is no more painful problem here than the unexpected disintegration in December 1991 of the Soviet Union, which had existed for 70 years," L. Hockstader, the newspaper's Moscow correspondent, wrote. "This event spelled disaster for millions of Russians — the loss of prestige, pride, and power. The wound still hurts to this day."

The Communists, the item goes on to say, are quite obviously endeavoring to make the Union's disintegration and Yeltsin's role in the country's collapse one of the election campaign's main issues. This question meets with complete understanding among most CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] supporters. Now Russian veterans and all people who have been degraded and turned into paupers recall the Soviet era as a time of social security, which, although it did not promise plenty, was guaranteed for everybody.

Noting that it will be "almost impossible" to bring several republics together again, including for financial reasons (because now the Kremlin does not have the funds to pay for current settlements and an IMF credit is needed to partially clear its debts. In these conditions there can be no question of investing big money in the economies of such republics as Tajikistan and Belarus), the WASHINGTON POST declares: "Nevertheless the idea of newfound glory with the Union's reestablishment has a powerful emotional appeal."

Russians are undoubtedly short of positive emotions right now. Maybe the very appearance of the hope in our people for the revival of the once great power and for changes in the policy of reforms which is ruining the country is feared by opponents of the Duma resolution both inside and outside Russia?

**Russia: Aims of Dep Premier Davydov's Visit to Libya Viewed**

*MM2003161296 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Mar 96 p 6*

[Unattributed report: "Russian Delegation To Begin Visit to Tunisia and Libya Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, AL-HAYAH — AL-HAYAH has learned that Russian Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Davydov will today begin a visit to Tunisia and Libya. He will discuss in Tripoli Moscow's position on the international sanctions imposed on Libya, in addition to bilateral relations.

The delegation includes a number of senior officials from various ministries, including Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk.

A Russian diplomatic source has told AL-HAYAH that the delegation will stress "Russia's objection to toughening the sanctions" on Libya. And that this issue has been discussed with "scores of states" and was

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one of the topics discussed during the Russian-Egyptian meetings held in Sharm al-Shaykh, which reflected "proximity" between Moscow's position and Cairo's.

No new agreements are likely to be concluded between Moscow and Tripoli. However a Russian expert in the region's affairs has told AL-HAYAH that "talking openly is more important than scores of agreements."

As is known, Moscow has long been trying to recover the debts owed by Libya, or part of them, as proof of the other side's goodwill.

Russian ministries are seeking to consolidate a foothold in Libya and to work in the sectors not subject to the sanctions or to pave the way for resuming its activities in the currently banned domains.

**Russia: Primakov Interviewed on NATO, CIS**

*MM2003175096 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 3*

[Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Primakov by Yelena Ovcharenko; date and place of interview not stated: "Minister Primakov Will Not Allow Russia To Become Shadow of the West"]

[FBIS Translated Text] If there were still lines in our country one of the longest would be for the office of Foreign Minister Primakov. Dozens of his foreign counterparts are patiently waiting for a "window" to open for them in his busy schedule.

Abroad it is customary to consider the first 100 days of a presidency a yardstick of a politician's soundness. We do not have such a practice, but in the 70 days that Yevgeniy Maksimovich has headed the Foreign Ministry he has demonstrated an impressive ability to get results. What is the mood of the head of the Russian foreign policy department today? We talked about this with the minister.

[Ovcharenko] Yevgeniy Maksimovich, what is your attitude toward the recent State Duma decision on the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements and the "restoration of the USSR?"

[Primakov] It goes against Russia's interests in international relations and undermines the legal base under the existence of our state. Moreover, the Duma decree cancels out the sovereignty of the CIS countries, yet it is that sovereignty's conservation which is an essential condition for creating the basis for the new integration processes toward which we are striving.

Additional arguments are given for those Western opponents who are militating for NATO's expansion. After all, they claim that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe want to join this alliance because they are afraid of the restoration of the USSR in its previous form and also because of the unpredictability of Russian foreign policy.

We have many people who would not like to jettison all the values which have accumulated during our history, and that is right. But the method which the State Duma suggests is not a return to those values but the blocking of the real process of integration whereby it is possible to restore all that is best that used to be part of the USSR and to avoid the bad that also used to exist in the Soviet Union.

[Ovcharenko] You do not hide the fact that your main task is to defend Russia's national interests. What does that mean in practice? And what are these interests?

[Primakov] They form an entire system and I would not arrange these interests in order of priority now, they are all important. There is the conservation of Russia's territorial integrity, the development of integration processes in the CIS area. The creation of foreign policy conditions for progress in the economy, the expansion of the democratic process in society. Finally, the stability of the international situation, I have in mind primarily the ending of conflict situations near Russia's borders, on the territory of the CIS countries, and in Central Europe. And also the struggle against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and against international terrorism. The country's foreign policy should serve all this. Here it is possible that the interests of Russia and other powers may not coincide. In such cases it is essential to do everything to ensure that there is no confrontation, but that does not mean we must surrender our positions. I stress: We should not and even must not surrender them.

[Ovcharenko] Why are you categorically opposed to the country leaving world diplomacy for a while for the shadows, regrouping, catching up economically, and returning to the orbit of the world as a strong power? After all, there are supporters of this position.

[Primakov] This should not be done if only because there are no vacuums — either in nature or in politics. Russia's place, which it spent a long time winning in international relations, will be taken by others. Second, the country is far from having lost its potential and the influence which it used to wield.

[Ovcharenko] In the past five years Russian diplomacy has existed without a clear strategic concept. The Foreign Ministry has lived one day at a time. Do you intend to define guidelines?

[Primakov] The point is not that I am defending my predecessors. You can agree with me or not but there was a concept. And it consisted in emerging from the

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cold war through the normalization and improvement of relations with former opponents. I want to stress that in Russia there is a "watershed" not between those who want confrontation and those who do not but between those who believe we must joint civilized society by any methods and at any price and who are moreover in a number of cases "driven" by the so-called "civilized powers." I, like the opponents of this approach, cannot agree with that. Partnership should be unconditionally equal.

[Ovcharenko] It seems that in recent years we have rapidly lost our positions even in those regions where our influence was strong for decades. For instance in the Near East....

[Primakov] We explain our inadequate activity in the Near East by the fact that our efforts were aimed at evening out relations with the former cold war adversaries. But this was done without an understanding of the fact that, by not surrendering our positions in the regions and even strengthening them, we would have paved the way to the normalization of relations. A shorter and more direct way.

[Ovcharenko] You speak constantly of NATO, both with your foreign counterparts and with journalists. Can your position change in any way under the influence of talks? If not then what measures would be acceptable to Russia and capable of moving the sides from the positions they hold?

[Primakov] Any measures which do not include advancing the NATO military infrastructure to our territory. These measures can be discussed.

[Ovcharenko] It is noticeable that our contacts have become livelier with the countries of the "risk zone" — Iran, Libya, and Syria. And this has become an undoubted trump card for Russia at the "peacemakers' summit" in Egypt. What is your approach?

[Primakov] The main thing is that an understanding should grow in these countries of the need not only not to support terrorism but also to take countermeasures against it. Here are examples for you. At a press conference in Moscow the Iranian foreign minister stated that his country does not support the Hamas organization, which has taken responsibility for acts of terrorism in Israel. Libya stated that it has stopped financing terrorist groups and has virtually abolished all training camps on its territory.

I think that all this is happening not without Russia's influence. It has also been assessed positively in the West which does not maintain relations with these countries at all.

[Ovcharenko] How has your post as minister affected your personal life?

[Primakov] I leave for work just as early as when I was a director of the Foreign Intelligence Service but I come back even later....

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## Political Issues

### Russia: Zyuganov: Coup 'Very Nearly' Broke Out 17 Mar

*MM2103103496 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1*

[Interview with Gennadiy Zyuganov, chairman of Communist Party of Russian Federation Central Committee, leader of Communist State Duma faction, and Russian presidential candidate, by Valentina Nikiforova; place and date not given: "Gennadiy Zyuganov: 'We Are Fulfilling the Voters' Will'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Zyuganov] The repeal of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements and the elimination of the abnormal situation in which Soviet people found themselves were the most important point in our election programs in both 1993 and 1995. We put this program to voters from Sakhalin to Kaliningrad. Note that it gave rise to no doubts in any of the state's leaders. We said openly that we would seek the legislative annulment of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements and the creation of the necessary conditions for the phased restoration of the unified union state on a voluntary basis.

We really did seek this: We made over 15 attempts to include this question on the State Duma's agenda. Again there were no objections either from the president's representative, for example, or from Russia's neighbors. But when the decision was nonetheless adopted, threats came thick and fast.

[Nikiforova] It is understandable why: The presidential campaign of the "party of power" is collapsing. An opportunity has arisen here to make their presence felt loudly once again. The president ought to thank us for such an opportunity!

[Zyuganov] He ought to thank us for something else: for helping him to deepen interstate integration in practice.

[Nikiforova] He did not realize this. Or his advisers placed the emphasis elsewhere.

[Zyuganov] On Sunday the country was standing a step away from a great misfortune. We thank the people in uniform and with honor for not wavering. They evidently also realize that the present five-year reign has been five years of coups. Remember: August 1991, December 1992, March and October 1993. There was very nearly a fifth coup Sunday.

[Nikiforova] The Federation Council adopted a decision whereby the State Duma must go back to the decrees adopted Friday. What do you think about this? Will the deputies change their decision?

[Zyuganov] We are in favor of seeking a way out of the situation. We are not in favor of confrontation. Our election bloc (there are already 51 organizations in it) proposes a creative program, a program of peace and friendship among peoples. I specially emphasize our position. We will definitely examine the Federation Council decision. We will consult the faction and our allies with regard to when we will do it. But it seems to me that we must, first of all, meet with our voters and learn their opinion. For there are — let's calculate: Some 15 million voted for the Communists, and the same again for our allies. In all, over 30 million. Their opinion must not be disregarded. We are accustomed to keeping our word, and our election promises were not just electioneering but perfectly serious intentions, which people supported. I believe that it is criminal to disregard their opinion, the opinion of collectives and of every person (on 17 March 1991 everyone personally expressed his own opinion).

[Nikiforova] Maybe there are some other options?

[Zyuganov] I long ago suggested that representatives of the three branches of power regularly hold meetings and discuss topical questions. Then there would have been no offensively bitter fairytales like this one going around. The question "What legal argument can be used to corroborate the need to extend Yeltsin's presidential powers?" receives this reply: "The Taman-Kantemirov one" [allusion to elite military units]. I hope this is not a prophetic tale.

### Russia: Kulikov: Interior Forces 'Fully Subordinated' to Yeltsin

*LD2003215496 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 2025 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Officers of the regional directorate for combating organized crime today detained a terrorist carrying a powerful bomb. The arrest took place near the Novorossiysk movie-theater at 1600, that is at about the same time as a powerful bomb was found in a bus on Sunday.

The home-made bomb found on Sunday on a No. 157 bus could have Chechen connections. We were told this by Russia's Interior Minister Anatoliy Kulikov,

[Begin Kulikov recording] At any rate, Dudayev and his entourage have promised to carry terrorism to the whole country, and I believe that it is possible that this was an attempt to carry out the plans which they have spoken about; although we do not yet have any evidence of a Chechen link. [end recording]

After the discovery of the bomb on Sunday the Moscow militia went on heightened alert. This coincided with the statement by Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Russian Communists, that hotheads in the president's entourage

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intended to ban the activity of the State Duma and were already trying to give commands to the power-wielding ministries and departments to put their units on heightened combat alert. The interior minister said that he had not received any instructions about this. At the same time, the ministry's forces are fully subordinated to all decisions of Boris Yeltsin.

[Begin Kulikov recording] They must be ready to carry out any order from the president with regard to ensuring order on the territory of the country. [end recording]

As yet, Moscow's law enforcement bodies are carrying out orders to combat crime and to discover terrorists with bombs.

**Russia: Special Services Seal Off Duma 17, 18 Mar**

*LD2003180896 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1600 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] Deputies of the State Duma have instructed the Security Committee to investigate the special services' exercises which took place in the Duma building from the evening of the 17 March to the morning of 18 March. Let me remind you that during that period deputies were not allowed into the parliament and this is the grounds for the investigation. This subject is continued by parliamentary correspondent Ivan Trefilov:

[Trefilov] According to official reports the building was being searched for a bomb. However, Artur Chilingarov, deputy chairman of the chamber — who was able to get into the Duma on Sunday — was given a different version by representatives of the security services. A group of terrorists had been found somewhere near Moscow. They were intending to attack the Duma and that was why the military were preparing to defend it. The next morning a different deputy was refused entry to the building because of a high-level of radioactivity inside.

Meanwhile, representatives of the Interior Ministry stated officially that exercises to repel a possible terrorist attack were being carried out in the parliament building.

Viktor Ilyukhin, chairman of the State Duma's security committee, does not believe such reports.

[Begin Ilyukhin recording] This was nothing other than an abuse of power because these actions coincided with certain commands which were given to the troops — special services and special purpose troops — a little earlier and also during these so-called exercises. I consider that they were all linked together and I believe there was no question of any exercises here. [end recording]

[Trefilov] Viktor Ilyukhin said that the No.2 and No.4 divisions of the Moscow Military District were put on heightened combat alert and additional militia units had been brought into the city. At the same time, according to information from the committee chairman, at a certain stage common sense prevailed and the action was called off.

[Announcer] We contacted the defense minister and Yelena Agapova, the minister's public relations assistant, told us that on the day there was a search for a grenade in the State Duma building, the troops of the Moscow military garrison had not been put on heightened combat alert and there were also no exercises.

**Russia: Authorities' Moscow Bomb Scare Response Examined**

*MM2003145696 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 20 Mar 96 pp 1-2*

[Report by Igor Pankov and Viktor Sokirko: "Country Lives in Expectation of Explosion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A powerful explosive device has been defused in Moscow. An unknown terrorist has threatened to blow up an airliner from Orenburg. Residents of the city of Izobilnyy in Stavropol Kray are agitated by rumors of radioactive containers planted by Dudayev's guerrillas. The timer for all-out terror in Russia seems to have been set. Where will it go off tomorrow?

The discovery of a powerful bomb in Moscow 17 March planted in a bus and defused 20 minute before it exploded was...predictable. This bomb was simply bound to be found. An actually nonexistent explosive device had to be invented. If only to "encourage" the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Federal Security Service, whose "vigilance has slackened" amid a plethora of hoax calls about alleged bombs at the most varied of installations. And in order, on the other hand, to show citizens that the "CHEKA [immediate post- revolutionary name of security service] is wide awake." However, canisters of TNT linked up to a timer were found by vigilant driver Aleksandr Arshinov on bus route 157 (this great chap is the only person in this whole saga to have shown vigilance and saved a few dozen lives).

We were told by the Federal Security Service that every day law-enforcement agencies throughout Russia receive hundreds of anonymous calls regarding nonexistent explosive devices. The overwhelming majority of these prove to be hoaxes. That was the case 18 March for instance when a stranger telephoned about a "bomb" that had allegedly been planted aboard a Tu-134 en route from Orenburg to Moscow. The airliner had to land in Ulyanovsk only to discover that the call was a hoax.

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However, real acts of terrorism involving explosive devices do nonetheless happen sporadically. In Moscow alone over the past two years over 10 of these incidents have been recorded. Lieutenant Colonel Mikhail Chekanov, a Federal Counterintelligence Service staffer, died 27 October 1994 trying to remove an explosive device planted at the Agat Science-and-Production Association to a safe place. In December 1994 there was an explosion under a train on Moscow's district railroad near Avtozavodskaya subway station. An explosive device went off 23 January 1995 in the Gagarinskaya prefect's office. There was an explosion 1 March that same year in the Dekor store at the Moskva Hotel. U.S. Embassy personnel found a bag containing an explosive device outside their building on Novinskiy Bulvar 22 August. A heating engineer found mines containing the equivalent of 1.2 kg of TNT 21 November at a gas station near Kutozovskiy Prospekt. A powerful explosion took place 27 January 1996 on Bolshaya Spasskaya Ulitsa in downtown Moscow killing a passing student.

The recent bus bomb could have been the most sensational act of terrorism — the explosion was timed for "rush hour" when the bus was traveling through a busy area. Who tried to organize this sensational act? The city internal affairs administration thinks that it will hardly be possible to find the terrorist — there is no evidence apart from the explosive itself. The police do not have any ideas either; so far there has been no concrete confirmation of a "Chechen trail." The Ministry of Internal Affairs said that there is no particular cause for concern either although acts of terrorism are very likely — law-enforcement agencies, which are unable to check out every suspect "bomber," are putting up no opposition. The capital's police have been put on increased duties and the organs' personnel have had their leave canceled just in case. However, there is no question as yet of emergency measures — the bomb did not after all go off.

There are a few extremely funny details about this tale of the bus bomb. Thus it is not known for instance how long the bus spent traveling around Moscow stuffed full of TNT. And there is another piece of confusion over time — according to official reports, bomb disposal experts from the capital's Federal Security Service directorate only arrived at the scene an hour and a half after the driver's call. There was also a long wait for a specially trained dog from Petrovka [Moscow police headquarters]. When asked why everything took so long, the Moscow Criminal Investigations Department said somewhat surprisingly: "The response time lags were not as cited, but the 'disinformation' put about by the press suits us."

So, there was a bomb. The most terrible thing is that another one may go off. Now when terrorism is extremely popular both in Russia and worldwide each of us may fall victim to someone's set-tos or political ambition. Is there any guarantee that all the national special squads designed to combat terrorism will be able to protect us from "mishap." Regrettably, not much. We can only cry: Citizens, be vigilant!

**Russia: Yeltsin Told Duma Vote Puts Election Date in Question**

*LD2003195496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1929 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Interfax) — The State Duma resolution effectively abrogating the Belovezh agreements on dissolving the USSR and setting up the CIS "puts a question mark over the holding of presidential elections in June," said speakers at a meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and political analysis and experts in the Kremlin Wednesday.

They also believed that the State Duma dealt a blow to Russian statehood and to Russia's relations with other CIS member nations. CIS leaders may meet in Moscow shortly to discuss the situation that has resulted from the State Duma action, the presidential press service said.

The meeting also discussed the situation in Chechnya. "The president reemphasized that the Chechen crisis can be resolved only by peaceful means," the press service reports.

The president said that he enquires about the payment of back wages several times every day, the report says.

**Russia: Grachev: Duma's Denunciation of Belovezh Accords 'Unsound'**

*LD2003180696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Interfax) — The State Duma resolution which effectively denounces the Belovezhye agreements is legally unsound, Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said in Moscow Wednesday.

Grachev told journalists that the armed forces do not respond to this resolution at all, and servicemen are engaged in the usual training.

According to Grachev, General Staff head Mikhail Kolesnikov left for the Leningrad Military District to attend the Redut-96 command exercise. All district commanders are staying in their areas and Grachev is not calling any conferences, he explained.

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Grachev said that parliament's ill-conceived resolution added to complexities in the world and Russian officials, including Yeltsin, have to make excuses for it.

**Russia: Initiators of Duma Resolution Issue Statement**

*LD2003165496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1107 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 20 (Interfax) — The initiators of the Duma resolution that effectively denounced the 1991 Belovezh Accords made a statement in Moscow today.

"Agitation around the resolution aims to distract attention from the social-economic disaster in this country, artificially create a political crisis, destroy the presidential elections, and leave unpunished the real destroyers of the union," says the statement of Russian Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Popular Rule deputy group Nikolay Ryzhkov and head of the Agrarian group of deputies Nikolay Kharitonov. The statement was passed over to the Interfax parliament correspondent.

Those who drafted the statement refute the accusations that the resolution aimed to stir up confrontation before the presidential elections. They said the Duma resolution is caused by "instructions given to the deputies in 1993 and 1995, when thousands of voters demanded abolition of the Belovezh Accords."

Zyuganov, Ryzhkov and Kharitonov do not think the Duma resolutions "encroach on the sovereignty of the Commonwealth republics and their gradual and mutually beneficial rapprochement." Thus, "the reaction of some Commonwealth leaders to the Duma resolution is emotional rather than legal."

The Communist Party and both groups of deputies "reaffirm that the only goal of this resolution is to open the path to gradual and voluntary integration of fraternal peoples, the sovereignty of whose states will remain intact."

**Russia: Duma Move on USSR Distracts Attention From Chechnya**

*MK2003133396 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 1*

[Article by Vitaliy Tretyakov, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA chief editor, seventh in the "What Is Being Done" series: "The Communists Temporarily Helped Yeltsin To Put the Chechen Problem on the Back Burner"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems that the stakes are rising in the Russian election campaign. Some are fearful of their defeat — others, of their victory. Everyone fears that the elections might be canceled or delayed under some pretext or other — speculation about that has mounted in the upper echelons of Moscow's political elite. To all appearances, this is what Gennadiy Zyuganov used — or bought — when he first pronounced aloud what others discussed in a low voice. This may not have been the best possible pretext, but Gennadiy Andreyevich appears to have wished to sound out both public opinion and the president as to their reactions to making this information public. Public opinion remained indifferent. And the president mocked the communist leader and main rival.

Of course, Boris Yeltsin is not himself interested in any force majeure or cancellation of the elections — only a lawful extension of his presidential authority (through reelection) will provide him with the foundation for guaranteed political longevity, all the more so because virtually all official and officially democratic mass media have already been predicting his victory. Not everybody in Yeltsin's entourage is so optimistic, however. Of course, they are not quite pleased with B.N.'s [Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's] own confidence, even though they believe in their chief's lucky star. But, nevertheless, they are drawing up reserve options, and Zyuganov got wind of one of them.

The other hope of Yeltsin's entourage is that the Communists might make a "fatal" mistake. It seems that they have deemed — somewhat prematurely — the left-sponsored Duma decision on repeal of the nullification of the 1922 treaty on the setting up of the Soviet Union to be such. One pro-Yeltsin side moved immediately to make the most of the situation by provoking excessive panic and demonstrating its excessive loquaciousness. The communist side, for its part, reacted very nervously to that. In all likelihood this was also done on purpose, so as to remove the last doubts among those still wavering. As a result, the left bloc has definitively consclidated its ranks.

It is Boris Yeltsin who reacted to the goings-on with the greatest composure. I do not think this was by chance. First, he is in fact holding talks on a qualitatively new round of integration within the narrow circle of CIS countries that are more prepared for it than others. The left opposition is unlikely to deter him from doing so without weakening its own electoral positions. All lapses in this process — first of all, Kiev's intransigence — can now be blamed with a clear conscience and good cause on the opposition itself. Second, the hoopla over Friday's Duma resolution turned out to be advantageous for Boris Yeltsin in general, since it distracted public attention from Friday's Security Council meeting on Chechnya, which produced no results that could be

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communicated to the broad public. No specific (or even nonspecific) information was published on its option of resolving the Chechen problem, although it was precisely this news that was expected — not that on the repeal of the nullification of the USSR treaty. If this is just a coincidence then such collisions can only occur in plays by very good playwrights. But — come on — can it be by chance that, only the day before, the president gave a lengthy interview to Nikolay Svanidze in which, for the first time, he pronounced the hitherto secret word "confederation?"

Chechnya is the really vulnerable spot in Yeltsin's policy, but, paradoxically, it is the area where he can be least afraid of Communist criticism (apart from responsibility for the emergence of the Chechen crisis. But, after all, the voters are more concerned with the present than with the past): The Communist Party cannot protest against the struggle with the Dudayev regime, and the president has no intention of scaling it down. The Security Council cannot recommend doing so either. Participants in the Security Council meeting could only split between two options: hard-line and semi-hard-line. The hard-line option calls for energetic efforts to edge the rebels out into the mountains within the shortest time possible. But, as experience has shown, the shortest time is out of the question. The semi-hard-line option entails the resumption of talks and the so-called intra-Chechen dialogue, while keeping the army and the Internal Affairs Ministry troops in the positions they currently hold; that is, yet another "freezing" of the conflict. This option is essentially fine (for the election period) but is not very realistic. Leaders of the Chechen rebels understand that today it is Moscow, not they, that is running against the clock. Furthermore, the "freezing" will diminish the Communists' chances of victory in the presidential elections by giving a new ideological impetus to "the struggle for Ichkeria's independence." Plus, of course, Yeltsin can no longer be blind to the fact that some important strings of the Chechen conflict can be traced to Moscow. And those to whom they can be traced may enjoy their last months of reaping profits from something for the sake of which the strings were drawn.

In a word, if neither hard-line nor semi-hard-line does it, it had better be done in turns. First, try hard-line, and then — having pushed the spring to the limit — let it go. By the time of the April summit of the "Group of Eight" in Moscow in April, a golden rain of federal subsidies will evidently pour on those in Chechnya who have by that time agreed to make peace, or even to cooperate with, the center. Actually, the Kremlin simply has no other way out, except maybe by making an attempt at "big talks," for the sake of which a heavyweight figure from the Moscow political pack will have to be sacrificed — and that at the risk of being accused by the left and the army of surrendering to Dudayev.

Something important is currently being decided on the battlefields of Chechnya and the places in Moscow where, both officially and unofficially, flags are moved on the map rehearsing these battles. For this reason the worldwide hoopla over the "restoration" of the USSR would have been manufactured, had it not occurred on its own. Yeltsin has undoubtedly won this round in his match against Zyuganov. But Zyuganov's words are not a madman's ravings either; maybe he just wanted to warn Boris Nikolayevich?

**Russia: Zyuganov Criticizes 'Democratic' Media's Fuss Over Duma Decision**

*MM2003202096 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 3*

[Report by Galina Sedykh on Gennadiy Zyuganov press conference: "Gennadiy Zyuganov: 'I Am Sure People Will Understand Us'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "Election-96" press club met in the Journalists' Center on 19 March. Its guest was the single presidential candidate from Russia's popular patriotic forces: Gennadiy Andreyevich Zyuganov. The meeting aroused great interest among Russian and foreign correspondents. It should be said that Zyuganov himself has been attracting enormous general press interest ever since last December. The mystery is where our colleagues' products, hundreds of meters of videotape, radio and dictaphone recordings, written notes, and photographs are disappearing to, since none of it is getting to the general public, which confirms the general public opinion that a news blackout has been imposed on the thus far sole presidential candidate and also on the Communist Party of the Russian Federation faction's activities in general in the Duma.

Incidentally, this was mentioned at the press conference. In particular, it is indicative that neither Zyuganov's election platform — which has now brought together more than 50 parties and movements under a common slogan: "Russia, Homeland, People!" — nor the decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya agreements has featured, except in cunning commentaries by the "democratic" newspapers and television.

Strictly speaking, this is illegal, since journalists do not have the right to freely and tendentiously interpret state agencies' decisions and presidential candidates' election programs.

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Foreign colleagues, unlike ours, put serious questions, as if actually measuring Gennadiy Andreyevich for the role of the country's leader.

In particular, when asked whether the program will be good for everyone or only for the Communists, the presidential candidate commented that it would benefit all Russian citizens, because it proposes extricating the country from the crisis democratically, peacefully, and unconfrontationally: halt the nation's extinction; recover the social gains that would provide protection for everyone — the badly off, the aged, children; provide conditions for production and entrepreneurial activity irrespective of the form of ownership, while providing legal protection for all who work normally and conscientiously; establish peace, since the preparation of our own program for a peaceful solution of the Chechen problem is currently being completed and there will be guarantees that these events will not be repeated.

Wasn't the Duma hasty in denouncing the Belovezhskaya agreements without waiting for a broad expression of the CIS peoples' will?

Gennadiy Zyuganov's reply to this question, one that worries us all, was:

"The first part of the presentation of this question at the State Duma session was simply not shown, as if it did not happen. It was supported by many speakers of various persuasions. I would like to stress one detail: The question was in the 1993 program, and this thesis was also in the 1995 program, and it was published in all the papers, in millions of copies of them. Not a single comment, no censure, no protest! The issue was raised some 15 times in the Duma. If the authorities had been seriously concerned about this they would have promulgated it, but now that the ground has started to crumble beneath their feet in the course of the elections, they have decided to make a big event out of the decision and in so doing try to torpedo the election processes. And they are doing a pretty vigorous job of work. But if everyone looks carefully at the Duma decisions they will see that these restore the will of the citizens of the Russian Federation expressed in March 1991. And if we acknowledge one of the main articles of the Russian Federation Constitution, the people are the supreme sovereign, so let us act on that premise. Our comrades have been meeting with CIS ambassadors, and materials have been sent to all republics and sovereign states. I am sure that people will understand us — after all the Duma decision on denouncing the Belovezhskaya agreements refers only to the Russian Federation, and all the documents adopted in the context of the CIS remain legally valid. An opportunity is simply being provided for more intensive integration processes.

He went on to explain that integration would only be conducted on a voluntary, stage-by-stage basis, on the basis of existing realities and the will of CIS citizens, primarily along industrial production lines, via labor collectives in border oblasts. No one would and no one intends to encroach on anyone's sovereignty.

Gennadiy Zyuganov, the presidential candidate representing popular patriotic forces, had clear and specific replies to the many questions put by reporters, explaining again and again that the coalition is willing to make the widest compromise with everyone on the basis of an understanding and of the supreme priority, which is the integrity of Russia and the safety of citizens. The fuss made by the "democratic" media, particularly the television, about the State Duma decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya agreements is nothing but hysteria, in the face of the inevitable. The gentlemen are simply scared, and this is a true indication that Zyuganov is on course, with powerful support from the people. Moreover, having acquainted themselves with the positions and views expressed by Gennadiy Andreyevich in conversation with them in Davos, business circles were encouraged to become more vigorous in their activities. A large number of companies that had previously refused to cooperate and develop long-term investment programs in Russia are now willing to invest in our technology, in things that will pay for themselves many times over and benefit future as well as present generations.

**Russia: Livshits Blasts Duma for Raising Pensions, Wages**

*LD2003161496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1541 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin's economic adviser, Aleksandr Livshits, said on Wednesday that the vote in the State Duma (lower house) to raise the minimum pension runs counter to the efforts the government is making to clear the wage arrears.

The Duma's resolution "undermines the nation's economy," Livshits said at a session of heads of federal agencies who met to discus ways to settle the wage delay crisis.

On Tuesday, the Duma overrode a veto by the Federation Council (upper house) on the pension raising bill from March 1, he said.

Besides, lower house legislators are trying to override a veto on the wage raising bill, he said. "If the State Duma does it, all efforts by the executive branch to solve the

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back wage crisis will be useless. Wages will be paid out with delay for lack of funds," he said.

Livshits assured the heads of agencies that the government would do everything in its power to promote the public welfare.

**Russia: Yeltsin's Presidential Qualities Extolled**

*MM2003160396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 pp 1, 3*

[Article by Nikolay Yegorov, leader of Russian Federation Presidential Staff: "June Election: For Stability or for Upheavals?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Since B.N. Yeltsin announced his decision to run for a second term, the election campaign has started to acquire the features of a veritable sprint race. All its main participants have clearly increased their pace. The incumbent president and his campaign staff have shown that they not only have no intention of yielding to anyone but intend to take the lead: Completing the building of organizational structures throughout Russia, they are starting to devote ever greater attention to the chief task of explaining the president's political strategy and his policy of reforms and of Russia's democratic renewal.

The incumbent president is placing increasingly definite emphasis on the Russian provinces, which is evidently where Russia's fate will be decided. Here is just one, maybe individual, confirmation of this. Journalists have noticed that at the end of every week Nikolay Dmitriyevich Yegorov, leader of the Presidential Staff, sets out (true, he is, incidentally, at present the only member of the president's immediate entourage to do so) for some region — oblast, kray, or republic. There he does not just "familiarize himself with the state of affairs" but, chiefly, he meets with people, explaining the president's policy to them and answering numerous questions, including "awkward" ones.

These trips by N.D. Yegorov, whom the capital's press still usually describes as the "antipode" of the democrats, prompt people to doubt the veracity of such a description.

We asked N.D. Yegorov to share with our readers the views, assessments, and ideas which he usually addresses to his listeners in the regions.

Russia is renewing itself. Slowly and with difficulty, paying dearly for the unprofessionalism of many reformers not yet made wise by experience and, frequently, for the mistakes, miscalculations, and blunders of all the branches of our young power. But Russia has already embarked on the path of political and economic revival, on the road that can lead it to the building of a healthy, democratic society.

Very little of this path has been traversed, and the real fruits of renewal have not yet ripened. Maybe this is why a considerable section of our society today takes a guarded view of the course which they associate with the name of Russia's first president. But the majority of people are concerned about how to safeguard Russia against further upheavals and a new usurpation of power by some one party.

**The danger that the transformations which have been started might be halted has not yet been ruled out and, moreover, is very real. This means that Russia is once again facing an historic choice on the eve of the third millennium: To be or not to be?**

Whether there is to be a policy which, despite all the complexities and burdens, draws our country into a social structure which really ensures that Russia attains the highest — by modern yardsticks — forms of economic, social, and political life? Or are we doomed to another excruciating experiment involving a fruitless quest for a path to a bright future — a path that is unknown to anyone?

Whatever colors are used to paint a picture of present-day Russia, the fact remains that today, five years after the first presidential election, we are living not just in a different Russia but also in a far better Russia.

First, freedom of conscience, which has enabled many Russians to find the way to the Church, the right to information and the right to unite in parties, freedom of movement, deliverance from fear of saying a "wrong" word, respect for dissidence, freedom of private initiative (not only in the economy, moreover) — these and much else besides have transformed Russia in a very decisive way.

Second, Russia has managed to join the world community, and the external threat, particularly the nuclear threat, to its security has diminished sharply.

Finally, and this could be the most important point: A new, truly democratic mechanism for forming the top organs of state power has started working and proved its vital force.

Much has been written and spoken about the results of the December elections to the Duma. But I believe that those who perceived the election results almost as a defeat for the policy of reforms and as a refusal by Russians to trust the statesmen and the political forces pursuing this political line are categorically wrong (or unscrupulous).

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Not one of the parties and not one of the electoral associations which openly advocated restoring the past got into the Duma. Champions of the accelerated formation of market relations at any cost, using the toughest methods, did not receive support either. The people proved to be wiser than many politicians. In the Duma elections they supported, in principle, the policy of democratization and in-depth reform of the country. At the same time the voters clearly advocated the need to make serious corrections to it. Primarily, to strengthen the social orientation of the economic transformations.

No serious, responsible politician has the right to disregard this, the people's mood for change. But it is irresponsible and immoral to build a political game out of this, interpreting the people's just discontent at the mistakes made in the course of the reforms as rejection of them.

Some very young people might not recall or know that attempts to build a communist paradise have foundered not only in our country. The result was the same in East Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa. But it is probably more important not to forget the main point: Wherever communism was built, it was built primarily by means of the most shameless and total robbing of the peoples of the Soviet Union. It fell to their lot to pay both for international aid to dozens of countries and for the Cold War.

The result was not only the monstrous militarization of the Soviet economy but also the formation of a society in which citizens were taught to be dependent on the state, and it taught them to regard a half-impoverished — by world standards — gray existence as the "norm." Many of our present troubles originated right there. All this is also a measure of the scale and complexity of the tasks which faced Russia five years ago: To build a normal life on the basis of a normal economy geared to people's needs.

This work began on the initiative and with the active participation of Russia's incumbent president. This means that the upcoming election will not mean a choice between the candidates' good and better programs. We will have to choose once again between continuing the democratic reforms and turning back. But there is no way back, for behind us lies an abyss. Russia simply will not withstand another destructive revolution. A sharp turn by the ship of state under dashing captains and an inexperienced crew could result in a tragic shipwreck.

B.N. Yeltsin's agreement to run for a second term means that he is not just aware of his own responsibility for the cause that has been begun, for the achievements and the mistakes, but also knows what to do and how to do it so that Russia recovers and becomes a normal country with a healthy economy.

Of course, history does not repeat itself, but we should know history: The forgotten past frequently avenges itself cruelly. It should not be forgotten today that it was thanks to B.N. Yeltsin that Russia managed in a comparatively short time to pull back from the brink of the economic and political abyss which it found itself facing in 1990-1991. There was the empty treasury with a gold reserve which had vanished we know not where, the rapidly devaluing "wooden" ruble, the coupon system for the distribution of food, and, in the state sphere, rapidly withering statehood and the Soviet Union breaking up under the onslaught of the "sovereignties bandwagon." A national catastrophe was quickly heading toward us. B.N. Yeltsin was not afraid to assume responsibility for formulating a fundamentally new policy. He resolutely set about dismantling the old system and building a new political and socioeconomic system. It was this that saved Russia.

The left-wing radical opposition tries to portray itself as the only consistent defender of "the USSR's integrity" and the Russian president as being chiefly to blame for its disintegration. Therefore the attacks on the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements have become a kind of vogue for Communists and nationalists of every stripe.

There is more. The Communists and their closest allies in the Duma have ventured to take an extremely absurd and you could even say perfidious — with regard to Russia, its peoples, and even the world in general — step: They have tried to "repeal" the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements. A scandalous step, as the president described it. Juridically senseless and of no practical significance. But this step, whether or not G. Zyuganov and his colleagues wanted this, has shown the real face of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation].

The Communists are clearly seeking to undermine the growing stability of Russian society, to make Russia fall out with its neighbors, the former Soviet republics, and to make it into a bugaboo for the entire world community, such as the Soviet Union once was. And, having frightened everyone, to portray themselves as the fatherland's saviors. This is not so much an unwise policy as an immoral one. Russia and the Russian citizens within it are no more than a "handy tool" in the struggle for power. They are evidently counting simply on the feelings and emotions of the people, the majority of whom — this is perfectly understandable in a human way — even today still perceive "the USSR's

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disappearance" from the map of the world as their own personal drama.

The truth, however, is that it is thanks to B.N. Yeltsin that Russia saved from a terrible tragedy not only itself but also, perhaps, the whole world. **This is the true, not the invented, value of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements.**

The breakup of the USSR actually began during the years of perestroyka. The main reason was not the attempts to reform the obsolete totalitarian system but the inconsistency of attempts of this kind. In addition, the matter was finished off by M.S. Gorbachev's rushing from one extreme to another, his endless dashing about and maneuvering, and his fear of the changes which he himself seemed to have decided on. The CPSU started to break up before our eyes, with the result that the state mechanism, which had been adapted to serve the administrative edict system, also started to collapse.

In the union republics national movements started to strengthen, while the local leadership, underpinned by them, used articles in the constitution to "detach" itself from Moscow, reckoning on both preserving its own power and avoiding a national disaster if the union center were to collapse of its own accord. In such circumstances the proclamation of Russia's sovereignty (that act, incidentally, was supported by all the republic's political forces, including the Communists) was a real factor weakening the centrifugal tendencies within the Union. Moreover, this knocked a "trump card" from the hands of certain leaders in the Kremlin at that time in the struggle against healthy reforming of the Union — they wanted to turn Russia into an obedient tool for strong-arm pressure on the republics. But it was this that failed. The most important thing, however, was that real preconditions were being created for the Union's preservation — on fundamentally new principles, of course.

M.S. Gorbachev could not fail to realize this. His response — admittedly, belated — was the Novo-Ogarevo process. Incidentally, at that time B.N. Yeltsin was already, in point of fact, proposing to build the Union on the principles of a confederation — in other words an association of sovereign republics for the joint resolution of the most important problems associated, above all, with their military, economic, political, and ecological security and with ensuring civil rights and freedoms. But M.S. Gorbachev evidently took fright at such in-depth reforming of the Union and also obviously could see no worthy place for himself in such a Union. The plotters of the State Committee for the State of Emergency took advantage of the general secretary's indecisiveness and vacillation: The putsch was aimed at forcibly making fast the collapsing Union on obsolete totalitarian principles.

The logic of the development of subsequent events was inexorable: After the putsch the Gorbachev leadership found itself in disarray and paralyzed, while the secession of the Baltic republics sanctioned by the center and then Ukraine's decision to become independent, confirmed by a referendum, made the breakup of the USSR an accomplished fact.

The question now arose in a different way: How to avoid the uncontrolled collapse of the USSR, if I may put it this way — a process which had started to spread also to the Russian Federation. This, briefly, is the prehistory of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements. They not only did not "provoke" the Union's breakup but were creating — and did create — preconditions for the maximum limitation of its inevitable negative consequences.

The opposition does not like to speak of international affairs and confines itself, as a rule, to "general disapproval." This is no coincidence. It clearly has no wish to pay tribute to the achievements in the external sphere over the past five years. These are of a principled nature:

— underpinned by the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements, Russia managed to do everything to ensure that independent states were formed comparatively smoothly in the post-Soviet area, in order to prevent quite likely military conflicts between them;

— Russia helped all the former Soviet republics to "join" the world community, avoiding the perfectly real threat of international isolation;

— while not in the least forgoing its own national interests, Russia succeeded in laying the foundations for partnership and mutually advantageous cooperation with the near abroad and thus averted the destabilization of international relations as a whole;

— by taking on the burden of succeeding to the Union's main foreign policy obligations, Russia saved the continuity of the processes of curbing the arms race — above all, the nuclear arms race — and maintaining and strengthening stability in the world;

— finally, Russia drew a line under World War II, improved relations with all nuclear states, and did not spoil relations with a single country with which the USSR had maintained ties.

As a result, not only was the country's national security substantially strengthened **but Russia proved in practice that it was ready and able to take over from the USSR the positions of a great world power.**

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Such a right is given to no one free of charge or "on credit." It is won by a state which knows, on the one hand, how to make its actions and its conduct in the international arena exactly commensurate with its own real potential (economic, political, military) and, on the other hand, how to uphold its own natural, vital interests firmly and even toughly, allowing no one to either humiliate, slight, or weaken it. It was B.N. Yeltsin who, by his calm yet firm foreign policy and his consistently reforming course inside the country, helped Russia to become just such a state.

It is said that there is no such thing as friends in politics, that interests alone are honored in politics. So you would think that the fact that B.N. Yeltsin has managed to establish good, respectful relations with the world's leading politicians — Clinton, Kohl, Chirac, Major — is of no great significance. But this is not so at all. B.N. Yeltsin joined the club of world leaders not because of his ability to speak eloquently and fervently of peace and friendship but because of persistent and conscientious work in all the main areas of international politics. As a result, Russia is far less feared than the USSR was, even in the times of Gorbachev, but Russia is certainly not reckoned with any less in the world. At the same time people frequently expect from it — and get — quite specific aid and become accustomed to relying on it. But they rely on the Russia of Yeltsin, on his foreign and domestic policies. Therefore the incumbent president's departure from the Kremlin could destabilize international relations and thereby undermine Russia's national security.

Incidentally, Russia and its president have taken a very firm stand on the plans for NATO's eastward advance. This is already yielding fruit. But the accession to power of G. Zyuganov's Communists would undoubtedly provoke the West into accelerating this idea, and NATO really would approach Russia's borders. Moreover, the possibility that this would also push certain former Soviet republics into NATO's embrace certainly cannot be ruled out. Particularly if you take into account the repercussions of the Duma vote on the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements.

The costs of building the new statehood and economic transformations in extreme circumstances are inevitable. In Russia they have proved quite great. But they are far less than they could have been if we had taken fright and backed down. We have avoided civil war, prevented economic chaos, and created good groundwork for enlivening our economic life. We have accumulated over $12 billion in currency reserves, made the ruble convertible, at least in Russia, and done away with coupons and lines. We have surmounted the most painful phase of the development of market structures and the structural restructuring of the economy. This has made it possible to reduce the rate of inflation substantially and virtually halt the production slump.

And finally, something which could be described as the most fundamental achievement of the past period — the preservation of Russia's unity and integrity on the basis of federalism. Never before have the republics, krays, oblasts, and autonomous formations built their relations with the center on the basis of a demarcation of powers and responsibilities strictly defined by the Constitution, nor have they ever before enjoyed such rights in solving questions concerning the development of their territories.

To sum up, today — five years after B.N. Yeltsin's first victory — it is perfectly clear how significant his arrival in big-time politics has been for Russia, for Russian society, and for each and every Russian. Russia has taken its legitimate place in world society, a place befitting its grandeur, and this enables it to consistently uphold the security and interests and its citizens. Russian society, albeit still slowly, is acquiring the features of a civil society. Finally, each Russian is beginning to feel with growing confidence that he is a truly autonomous and free citizen of the new Russia rather than just a cog and the slave of an alienated administrative edict system.

Reforms do not happen for reforms' sake. All reforms and the president's entire policy are geared to the creation of conditions ensuring man's dignified life and free development. When Boris Yeltsin realized that the cost of reforms was getting too high, he immediately started introducing amendments. These are not concessions to the "left wing" or the "right wing," these are concessions to common sense and society's real needs.

**There is no alternative to reforms. But there is — and there must be — an alternative to the mistakes, miscalculations, and failures that were allowed to occur.** Five years ago it was obvious that reforms had to be launched. It was necessary to act swiftly to prevent the country's collapse. It was also obvious, however, that such a vast country could not be changed either overnight or in 500 days. In my view, much was done too hastily, nobody calculated what it would cost to millions of people. Today we are clearly aware that this was not worth doing. But we did not have much choice at the time, either. The important point is to learn lessons from the accumulated experience. And the president has done this, as shown by his statement: The reforms will be pursued and deepened, but not at any cost.

B.N. Yeltsin is often accused of authoritarianism, he is loudly accused by newspapers, at rallies, and from the

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television screens. These people appear not to notice how cynical all this looks — after all, it is the president, and not his opponents who accuse him of antidemocratic attitudes, who is the main and consistent guarantor of civil liberties in Russia, including the freedom of speech.

Let us recall August 1991. The putsch was put down, Yeltsin's personal ratings shot up astronomically. The opponents were demoralized. Hotheads among the right-wing radicals at the time demanded a complete ban of the Communist Party, closure of the party press, promulgation of an edict on vetting, and introduction of "controlled" pluralism. But Yeltsin, in his capacity as nationwide leader, did not succumb to these demands and these temptations.

Let us recall April 1993. The first grave confrontation between the legislative and executive branches of power. The president rejected the idea that was being forced upon him — to introduce a covert state of emergency — and submitted a proposal on referendum, on confidence in him and the course being pursued. And he got it.

Let us recall October 1993. Russia found itself on the brink of a new civil war. Yeltsin, having put down the armed mutiny, did not take advantage of the situation to become an "autocratic ruler." He remained true to his own self, announcing that the country would hold its first elections to parliament, the country's new legislative and representative organ. And he aimed for free elections. At the same time, the referendum offered the means for a direct expression of the people's will and the adoption of the new Constitution. Having legislatively affirmed the principle of the separation of powers, Russia embarked for the first time on building a law-governed state.

The president has been and remains a consistent champion of upholding the basic principle of democracy — the freedom of speech. Of course, the state has supported and will continue to support primarily the state mass media. And their main task today is to publicize the objectives and meaning of the Russian state's policy and to engage in explanatory and educational activity. It is from these positions that the president proceeds to build his relations with journalists' collectives. These relations are becoming relations of partnership and mutual responsibility for the state's future, not of struggle against the state and its structures.

Democracy does not mean unrestrained and boundless liberty. It does not mean liberty to flippantly level accusations and infringe freedom. Democracy primarily means responsibility. This is why, in a free society which respects and encourages difference and diversity of opinion, dissidence in power is both unimaginable and impermissible. If you disagree with the state's line, then get out, get involved in public politics, criticize, try to change things. Ultimately, this is a matter for everyone's conscience. But to work within the power structures and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the power structures to publicly criticize these selfsame power structures — this is not simply unacceptable, it is dishonorable. Incidentally, it was B.N. Yeltsin himself who opened the doors to big-time politics for all of today's democrats without exception. Including all of his opponents today. And he never vilified a single one of them.

B.N. Yeltsin's opponents love to accuse him of retreating from democracy. But they are being obviously sly when they "confuse" democracy with weak authority and deny that a healthy and strong state can be democratic. Yeltsin does not just talk about imposing order, he is actively doing this.

This is why the struggle against prosperity at the state's expense, against embezzlement of state funds and corruption, is being constantly monitored by the president. Society has already seen the initial results. Only thus will we be able to get rid of the chronic delays in the payment of wages and pensions, of the infiltration by criminal elements in the economy and the structures of power, of gangsterism and terrorism.

This is a most difficult struggle, and the president is aware that, when invading the criminal fraternity's holy of holies — the sphere which is contaminated by corruption — he is acquiring a host of enemies. In these conditions, only the people's support for B.N. Yeltsin and for his uncompromising struggle against crime of all types and hues, will be able to prevent the country falling into the abyss and give people hope for the future and for their children's future.

Russia's most painful problem today — the Chechnya problem — is most closely linked with this. The president's critics and opponents pin on him personally all the blame for events which have occurred there over the last five years and for the bloodshed that is still going on. But we must not forget that Chechnya, way back in the early 1990's, had already become a kind of test site where attempts were being made to experiment with anticonstitutional means of waging struggle against the new Russia's constitutional system.

In all probability no soberminded person would argue that the solution of the conflict is possible by using only strong-arm or only peaceful (negotiation) methods. Here it is necessary to combine political, strong-arm, socioeconomic, and diplomatic efforts. An immediate

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withdrawal of troops from Chechnya would be ineffective. This could lead to large-scale bloody "settlement of accounts" between different clans, the shift of terrorist methods of struggle to Russia's territory, and a real civil war. In these conditions, the solution of the crisis presupposes a high degree of mutual understanding and coordinated actions by all branches of power, by the civilian and military structures playing a part in normalizing the situation in Chechnya. All these are political axioms.

And yet the Chechen crisis is moving toward its conclusion. The bandits who have broken the law and trampled the honor and dignity of their compatriots must and will be punished in accordance with the law. But only the bandits. There can be no deportations like in Stalin's time, there will be no repressions against the Chechen people. The president has said this precisely and clearly. There cannot be any enemies in one's own country. The main point is to give all citizens — Russians, Chechens, and the dozens of other nations and ethnic groups living in this land of plenty — an opportunity to live and work in tranquillity.

**There are less than 100 days left until the presidential elections. Will B.N. Yeltsin gain victory again?**

Many people feel that Russia's president is inferior to his main opponents who are running for the post of head of state. People assume, for example, that G. Zyuganov, G. Yavlinskiy, and V. Zhirinovskiy are benefiting from the fact that they supposedly bear no responsibility for the past and the present. But whenever people decide in favor of one candidate for the post of Russia's president or another, they ought to consider not the fact that he has not committed any mistakes in the past or the present (it is well known that only people who do nothing commit no mistakes) but his ability to prevent (should he come to power) any redistribution of property and any breakdown of social relations which is fraught with the collapse of society and new social upheavals.

The last elections to the State Duma showed that now there is not a single political force in the country which would reflect the interests of the entire Russian population. Yes, the left-wing forces and primarily the CPRF did win one-third of all votes. But two-thirds of Russia's adult population do not share the Communists' ideas. The results achieved by other political forces at the 17 December 1995 elections also prevent them from claiming to speak on behalf of the whole people.

Today's political reality is such that a partisan president, representing the interests of only a section of the population, will not be able to pursue his political line and honor his election campaign promises legitimately, without coercion against those who disagree with him. Sooner or later he will be tempted by coercion according to the principle of "kick them all the way to paradise."

Many of the CPRF leaders are not stretching the truth when they say that the Communists are allegedly no longer what they used to be; that their party allegedly does not intend to break down the new economic relations; that, allegedly, they will not engage in persecuting their political opponents when they come to power.

But the CPRF is not at all as monolithic and unanimous in its views as it would like to appear. For example, G. Zyuganov hardly expresses the views of the entire leadership, and the "party grass roots" hardly agree totally and entirely with the leadership. Finally, the positions of all left-wing forces which have nominated the Communists' leader as their joint candidate certainly do not coincide with the CPRF's line in all regards.

The further you get from "G.A. Zyuganov's entourage," the beliefs of Communists become more and more orthodox and the methods for remedying the situation become more and more "revolutionary." You get the impression that Gennadiy Andreyevich himself and his friends of the supposedly social-democratic hue and the model "Communist-capitalists" like V. Semago are nothing but a presentable cover concealing the real views of the party. Of a party, the majority of whose supporters yearn for a return not even to the perestroyka times but to the times of profound "stagnation" in the early 1980's. This being so, if a Communist takes over the post of Russian head of state, this cover will be cast off as inappropriate.

There is no doubt that, if the Communists were to gain the summits of state power, this would mark the beginning of the restoration of soviets and all the other old structures, of the revival of the style and way of life for the country and society which are typical of all authoritarian systems. This would inevitably mean new upheavals. Our country has already lived under a general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee who vacillated between different ideological camps but simply failed to transform his party and only ruined a great country. To put it briefly, we could face a situation somewhat reminiscent of August 1991, when Gorbachev ended up the hostage of his "orthodox colleagues." Yeltsin saved Gorbachev. There will be no one to save Zyuganov.

The two other main contenders for the time being — V. Zhirinovskiy and G. Yavlinskiy — are distinguished not so much by real programs as by their inclination toward "simple solutions." This cannot fail to put us on guard: There are no simple solutions to complex problems. Generally speaking, any reliance on "simplicity"

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in politics is dangerous. It does, of course attract unsophisticated people, people who either do not know or refuse to accept that simple solutions, while failing to "solve" the problems, only create more and more problems.

V. Zhirinovskiy, for example, recently proposed to "napalm Chechnya and the Chechens." And G. Yavlinskiy believes that he could have implemented the reforms less painfully than Ye. Gaydar and V. Chernomyrdin. Briefly speaking, his "500 Days" program was tougher and even more cruel than Gaydar's: It did not envisage the mechanisms for social protection of the population which were introduced in 1992.

G. Yavlinskiy, as the Gaydar-democrats often claim, is highly ambitious. Judging by the way he behaves even among his potential allies, he is not capable of uniting Russian society. Finally, to put it bluntly, he has no serious experience in state work.

These, and almost all other candidates, represent some political force or party. But Russia now needs a president who would be above party passions, who would bear in mind and preserve the entire balance of political and socioeconomic interests prevailing in society. For a long time B.N. Yeltsin has been accused of failing to create his own party, he has been actively encouraged to do so, but he has remained above partisanship: Party membership in our country today runs to about 1 million Russians, while the country is populated by 150 million. The president must take into account the opinion of the majority, not party interests.

**Russia will not have a wide choice in June: Either to continue the reforms which have been launched and consolidate democratic rights and freedoms, or return to some form of totalitarianism.**

Only the present president is capable of ensuring the first. Not because he is infallible and ideal, but because:

— today, at present, there is no other politician in Russia with five years' experience of running the state in the most difficult transition period, a man who, by dint of just this single circumstance, knows what should be done and how in order to prevent Russia from sliding into a "red" or any other totalitarianism;

— today, at present, there is no other politician in Russia except Yeltsin who is capable of talking and acting not on behalf of just one party or "ideology," but in the name of the interests of the whole people and of all Russia;

— today, at present, B.N. Yeltsin's withdrawal from the struggle for the presidency would inevitably pave the way not for another and "better" democrat but for an antidemocratic dilettante (whether Communist or chauvinist);

— today, at present, B.N. Yeltsin is not just "the man in power" but, just like in the past, the sole responsible politician who has already proved in practice that he perceives power only and exclusively as democratic power;

— finally, today, at present, only B.N. Yeltsin is capable of ensuring a relatively calm conclusion of Russia's transition from totalitarianism and ruin to an open and free society, of preventing any new upheavals, and of maintaining and consolidating stability, order, and legality in society.

**Russia: Fedorov, Lebed, Yavlinskiy To Launch 'Third Force'**

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[Report by Nikolay Dolgopolov under the "Bloc" rubric: "'Third Force' Currently Divided Between Three"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Svyatoslav Fedorov, Aleksandr Lebed, and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy are the first three candidates to join an election bloc-cum-movement that is to be called "Third Force." It would appear that these three presidential candidates have managed to moderate their personal political ambitions somewhat and join together in a fairly unexpected alliance, whose aim is still the same: the presidency.

Today there are no leaders or led. There is a single task — to help Mother Russia to extricate herself from a dismal impasse.

Svyatoslav Nikolayevich Fedorov is absolutely sincere in his belief that between Zyuganov with his 25-30 percent communist electorate on the one flank and Yeltsin, who is supported by about 15-20 percent of Russians, on the other, there exists a silent and immense center. It is for this hitherto uncultivated ground that "Third Force" intends to fight. Here is to be found a huge reserve of 50 or perhaps even 60 percent of the vote.

And if a few other movements join "Third Force," Fedorov told me, it can expect success. Sergey Glazyev supports the bloc. Stanislav Govorukhin is thinking of joining. Sergey Baburin is hesitating, but not refusing to consider it. Only one potential ally, or rather, fellow traveler — Boris Fedorov — having flitted to and fro between movements and parties, has voluntarily pulled out of the race. He has declared his support for Yeltsin.

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[Dolgopolov] Svyatoslav Nikolayevich, surely "Third Force" will have to make the choice sooner or later anyway — which of the three of you?

[Fedorov] Indeed, sooner or later. We have determined on an absolutely specific deadline for ourselves — 15 May. We will see who collects more signatures and who has the highest rating and chances according to the opinion polls. We will decide this peacefully, without a great hullabaloo. I don't need power at 68 years old. But I grieve for the country....

[Dolgopolov] Are you not afraid that certain members of your movement will be torn away from "Third Force" by promises of high posts? One will be promised the premiership, another a ministry — it is tempting.

[Fedorov] We have firmly agreed: No, and again no.

[Dolgopolov] Do you have the funds for the campaign?

[Fedorov] It would be pointless to enter the race without them. We expect adequate financial support.

[Dolgopolov] Do you think that your single candidate has a chance of getting through to the second round?

[Fedorov] And even further.

[Dolgopolov] But what if he fails after all? For whom will you vote? It could be a straightforward choice between Yeltsin and Zyuganov.

[Fedorov] Personally I would be against both. Yeltsin and Zyuganov in the second round of the election? That means that Russia has no choice.

[Dolgopolov] Finally, you and I are talking in a completely unofficial atmosphere. When will the creation of "Third Force" be announced?

[Fedorov] Literally within a day or two. Absolutely officially and absolutely seriously.

**Russia: Yeltsin's State of Nation Address Analyzed**

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[Feature on Boris Yeltsin's message to the Federal Assembly: "The President's New Armor"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some 206 years have elapsed since the time of U.S. President George Washington's first speech to the Congress. The presidential speech genre has in the past three years passed the test in Russia quite successfully. This form of communication between the head of state and his people has proven extraordinarily convenient in the rapidly changing political and economic situation, despite the continuing distrust of it on the part of a certain section of society. Even a cursory analysis of the three presidential messages shows how over the past two years there has been a gradual change in the priorities of the domestic and foreign policy of the state and how the ideals of liberal reform have gradually been replaced by the ideals of social stability.

In spite of the current opinion concerning the inconsistency and unpredictability of Russian political life, the presidential messages of 1994, 1995, and 1996 have demonstrated how the president has step by step put ever increasing emphasis on state regulation and investment and structural policy and also on the resolution of social problems. A close reading of last year's presidential message "The Efficacy of State Power in Russia" would have spared Russian liberals the shock caused by the social fervor of Boris Yeltsin's post-December speeches. In turn, the contours of the Chechen campaign were discerned in the 1994 message "Strengthening the Russian State."

Granted all its outward similarity with the party report of the general secretary, the presidential messages do not require deciphering and are in no need of interpretation. As the creation of a free democratic society, this genre requires the maximum clarity of exposition and precision of whoever has assumed responsibility for the administration of the state.

Granted all their cupidity, the present authorities cannot be censured for falsity and an attempt to conceal the true aims of their policy. The very meaning of the working title of the message given in the early phases of its preparation—"The Russia for Which We Are Responsible"—gives candid notice of the campaign nature of the present document. It was, in fact, the first exposition of the campaign platform of Boris Yeltsin, who had recently officially joined the struggle to prepare messages to the Federal Assembly in the coming four years also.

**Import Commodity for Domestic Consumption**

Compared with the messages of last year and the year before, Boris Yeltsin said nothing that was fundamentally new in the present year's message. Although his delivery had a very emotional ring.

**Guidelines Designed To Please All**

The attention to social issues so emphatically brought out in the president's message was a consequence not only of political necessity but also of economic reality. The government could very shortly be seeing money for the implementation of quite a large-scale social program.

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**'Constituents, Do Not Make a Disturbance...'**

The president paid considerable attention in his message to restoration of the popular memory of the most recent past. This is almost the sole way of fighting the utopian and, therefore, no-lose programs of his competitors at the impending presidential elections.

**Frequency of Repetition in Boris Yeltsin's Messages to the Federal Assembly**

**'Strengthening the Russian State,' February 1994**

Market—15 times, Reform—14 times, Government—11 times, Reserves—8 times, Finances—8 times, Inflation—7 times, Cooperation—6 times, Constitution—5 times, Crisis—5 times, Plan—5 times, Struggle—4 times, Control—4 times, Democracy—twice, Foreign currency—twice, Taxes—twice, Slump—twice, Structural policy—twice, Well-being—once, Regulation—once, Private property—once.

**'Efficacy of State Power in Russia,' February 1995**

Chechnya—18 times; Region—17 times; Europe, reforms—13 times; Democracy, budget, support—11 times; Market—10 times; Investments, protection, right—9 times; Property owners, property—6 times; Securities, shares, privatization, inflation, stability—5 times; NATO—4 times; Research-intensive, high-tech, industry, human rights, the United States—3 times; Taxes, regulation, the West— twice; Agriculture, agrarian sector—once.

**How the Presidential Message Is Prepared**

It may be said that the techniques of preparation of the presidential message have already been worked out. The main component of drafters are presidential aides, among whom the main burden is borne by Georgiy Satarov (policy), Aleksandr Livshits (economy), and Yuriy Baturin (security). The work is coordinated by the president's top assistant Viktor Ilyushin. The concept of the future message, which is presented to the head of state, is drawn up at the first stage. Not once has he accepted the original concept of the message without appreciable emendations. The longest period of conceptual discussion involved the present message, the rough outline of which appeared last summer even.

At the second stage letters, which furnish the drafters with the necessary information in regard to the main sections: the economy, policy, security, culture, are sent out from the Kremlin to approximately 150 addresses of government, research, public, and business entities. This happens roughly two months prior to the appearance of the text of the message.

The incoming information is processed by analysts of the president's office, who convert it to the standard report length (up to five typewritten pages). Action appeals, of which there were more this year than in the two previous years, are collated also. This latter fact is seen by representatives of the Kremlin as oblique testimony to the fact that society perceives the message as a document which exerts a real influence on the economic and political course in the country. The presentation of rough drafts of the message also, which was done, for example, on behalf of the Reforms—New Course movement by Vladimir Shumeyko, former chairman of the Federation Council, was a fundamentally new feature of 1996. To demonstrate the connection of the president's message with society members of the Presidential Council, the role of the majority of whom, however, does not go beyond the framework of crowd scene, are also plugged into the work on the message right from outset.

Approximately a month prior to the appearance of the message a working group, which includes presidential aides, members of the Presidential Council, "independent experts," and representatives of the analysis outfits, is formed by an order pertaining to the president's office. It is at this stage, in fact, that direct work on the text begins. This work may be depicted in simplified form as follows: The draft lies on the president's desk, the president makes his observations, the text is emended, it is sent to the head of state once again, he once again makes his observations, and so on until the final version. It is notable that the circle of workers becomes progressively smaller and smaller. At approximately the fifth attempt the very sparse working group goes into seclusion in Volynskoye. Whereas earlier, in the liberal era, endless economic programs were written at the dachas, presidential messages are compiled at them now. The small group of drafters of the message (the head of state is officially considered the author of the message, incidentally) and the exceptionally strict measures to maintain secrecy at the final stage have engendered the exclusively Kremlin joke to the effect that "work on the message is a particularly intimate affair."

The president's speechwriters join in at the work's finale. Their job is to impart to the text a uniform and strictly particular style. As in Western countries also, tremendous significance is attached to the message's stylistics, and for this reason it is thoroughly discussed with the president. Particular attention at the final stage is paid also to ensuring that the message be free of departmental interests: The head of state has to stand above group interests and be the president of all Russians.

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### Import Commodity for Domestic Consumption

It is a rare political event in February that could rival in significance and general attention the president's message to the Federal Assembly. Coming from a totally different political world, the form of the head of state's communication with his people is still perceived in Russia as part of the exotica and oddities of power.

### History

The history of presidential messages in Russia is only two years old. The head of state made the decision to annually declare the guidelines of policy publicly at the end of 1993, at the time of the "phased constitutional reform." Now, when even devoted supporters of the present Kremlin elite are noting the bronzing of the regime, which is resurrecting in the memory the most striking features of state administration of the USSR in the post-Stalin era, the idea of a presidential message seems to be a foreign borrowing. At that time, though, following the suppression of the Khasbulatov Supreme Soviet, it was regarded as one further piece of evidence of Russia's introduction to the values of Western civilization.

The initiative for use of this move is ascribed to Aleksandr Livshits, the present presidential assistant for economics, who two years had held a far more modest position in an analysis subdivision of the president's office. The idea was immediately taken up by top presidential aide Viktor Ilyushin and appreciated by Boris Yeltsin, whom it afforded an opportunity to demonstrate his desire to build partner relations with the new legislature. It cannot be ruled, for that matter, that there is some sense in the words of cynics, who consider all the talk about the Kremlin authorities' desire to emphasize their Westernization merely advertising. If Livshits' idea did find a way to the president's heart, they believe, it is not because it reflected the "spirit of '93" but because it resurrected the image of a general secretary delivering the "Guidelines..." to the congress.

### Status

The question of status is not as simple as it might appear. The status of the president's message to the Federal Assembly is not defined in any way legislatively. In the Constitution the message to parliament is mentioned in Article 84 (clause "f"): "The president of the Russian Federation... shall address to the Federal Assembly annual messages on the state of the nation and on the guidelines of the state's domestic and foreign policy." What is this—a summary report, "Guidelines," information on the intentions of the entire executive or just its head? How should the executive itself in the shape primarily of the government perceive the president's message to the Federal Assembly? From the formal viewpoint the head of the government may let all that the president says pass through one ear and out the other inasmuch as the message has no legal validity. Especially since it is addressed to the legislature, and the article of the Constitution makes no mention of economics.

But in Russia only failures are guided in policy by formal logic. The overall party past of the entire political elite has imparted to the president's message the status of directive document, by which all subdivisions of the machinery of state are required to abide. Required to abide, however, does not mean that they actually do. It is here that the duality of the president's message is manifested. The form, borrowed from the West, is filled with purely Soviet content (the first two messages even echoed party reports structurally, reproducing the traditional sectoral principle of composition), but inasmuch, as distinct from the party-state system of the USSR, as contemporary Russia is, with certain reservations, considered, for all that, a state based on the rule of law, the form gains the upper hand. Granted all the outward reverence for the presidential epistolary genre, the government is guided in its work, all the same, by other documents. However much Sergey Glazyev struggled in his two years as chairman of the Duma's Economic Policy Committee, attempting to prove instances of the government's violation of the propositions of the president's message, all his appeals to the president were ignored. If the president had ever thought about replacing the premier, it was by no means on account of the latter's disregard for the message to the Federal Assembly.

### Influence

The question of the true influence of the presidential message on the country's political and economic life remains as yet a puzzle. It was impossible in the course of 1994-1995 to uncover the actual role of the message in determination of the economic course—it practically repeated the ideology of the budget and corresponded to the joint statements of the government and the Central Bank concerning economic policy. The question of what is primary, and what, secondary, in this case may be settled to some extent only this year inasmuch as at the conceptual level the present message differs seriously from the federal budget for 1996. The social fervor that has been characteristic of all Boris Yeltsin's public speeches since the parliamentary elections largely contradicts the austere financial policy which the Budget Act dictates.

If the texts of the two previous messages are analyzed in the context of real economic policy, it may be

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concluded that the policy actually pursued by the government in 1994 and 1995 differed appreciably from the declarations of the president's message. Thus, for example, two years ago the head of state made a sensational statement which was fundamentally new for official economic policy. Boris Yeltsin announced that "Russia will have to get out of the crisis independently," thereby putting the lid on Russian liberals' hopes of making use of the support of the West in the reform of the Russian economy. Subsequent events showed not only no diminution but a significant growth of the role of international financial organizations in economic policy in Russia and as donor of the Russian budget.

Two further notable statements of the president may be quoted: "1994 is to be the year of the start of the real structural reorganization of the Russian economy" and "The maximum permissible level of inflation cannot be exceeded. This requirement will be secured, by the constitutional authority of the president included." The structural reorganization of the economy continues, as before, without any meaningful state intervention, and all the constitutional authority of the president was insufficient for compelling the Russian economy in 1994 to fit within the parameters of the increase in the money supply established by the government program and that same presidential message (3-5 percent per month).

**Changes**

The differences between the government's and the president's vision of the national economy are explained by the principle adopted back in 1994 of separation of the concepts "economic reform" and "economic policy." It was declared at that time that the president would henceforward be responsible only for reform of the economy in general—he would only "defend and uphold the policy of continuation of the economic transformations." The status of "economic policy," on the other hand (the actual realization of this course, that is), was downgraded, becoming the lot of the government. The distancing of Boris Yeltsin from the day-to-day failures of the government's economic policy shapes the image of the president as the "guarantor of economic transformations." It is thus that we should understand the statement of Aleksandr Livshits, who directed the group of drafters of the economic part of the president's message: "The government may watch out for the sociopolitical effects, the president is required to."

If we analyze the previous messages and compare them with the latest steps of the executive, Boris Yeltsin's turn toward "reform with a human face," which has caused shock in liberal circles, proves to be by no means that unexpected. The president saw the key mission of the government even two years ago to be "stabilization of the living standard of the bulk of society." The need to overcome the arrears crisis, put an end to the stoppage of viable enterprises and halt the technological recoil of Russian industry, stimulate investment activity, and form financial and industrial groups competitive on foreign markets was being discussed not yesterday but back in February 1994.

True, at that time the change toward greater state regulation had only just been outlined conceptually, and the breath of the liberal era was still sensed in the public speeches of influential Russian politicians. Although the president had qualified the orientation toward continuation of the austere financial policy with the need to ensure the "attenuation and halt to the decline in production and active structural transformations based on the withdrawal of inefficient factories and the support of points of growth."

In this respect the 1995 message was truly revolutionary. It was born in an atmosphere fundamentally different from the previous one. The creation of a base for economic upturn and the strategic change in the direction of economic revitalization were linked in it with a stimulation of state regulation and the promotion of new priorities in investment policy. It is now obvious that there is nowhere in principle for national large-scale private capital to come from and that foreign investors are displaying no particular interest in the majority of inefficient sectors.

It is for this reason that the main idea of the message appeared in an entirely different form—the state should not abandon its role but, on the contrary, become more active and remember plainly its participation in the investment process. The social section also was developed in full even in last year's message. Social policy came to replace the task of an easing of the "social consequences of the reform" caused by the concentrated reduction in public spending. Two years ago the problem was posed in the context of an increase in the efficiency of budgetary outlays on the social sphere with the strategic objective of a minimization of public spending in general. Message-96 was a kind of memorial to such an understanding of economic policy. In the present message social policy has become an unconditional priority, almost having ascended to the "all for man, all for the good of man" slogan. Economic policy is, in fact, becoming the stepdaughter of social policy. If it is recalled that the first is the function of the government, and the second, the prerogative of the president, we could to the naive question "What is there that is fundamentally new in the presidential message this year?" even give the shocking answer: "Nothing."

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**Mikhail Deryagin: 'Guidelines Designed To Please All'**

The social fervor of the president's message is caused by a recognition not only of the laws of the election struggle but by strict economic necessity also.

**Main Lesson**

The present presidential message differs fundamentally from previous ones devoted to a description of the priorities and guidelines of the activity of the machinery of state. It is the main document formulating the conceptual principles of the president's election campaign. It cannot, therefore, be regarded merely as a collection of political slogans: The change in the set of the latter conceals real changes in economic policy.

We would recall that in 1994 the principal objective was implementation of the reform as such, that is, the market "change of the actual structure of the economic system," with a minimization of its cost, by which were understood inflation and structural crisis and a lowering of the living standard.

A year later the main objective was formulated as the building of a "bridge from the inflationary past to the investment future," that is, a surmounting of the investment crisis and technological modernization of the economy based on the curbing of inflation.

In 1996 the strategic objective has remained practically unchanged. This is logical inasmuch as the objective slowdown of all macroeconomic processes in a period of depression has increased the time required for the accomplishment of the main objectives. There has been a change of method: The state is switching gradually from predominantly macroeconomic and purely financial instruments, the possibilities of the use of which have proven to be exhausted, to the use of potential connected with a rise in financial discipline and the realization of its rights as a property owner and also with the direct stimulation of the development of the economy.

The revision of economic policy is largely connected with a clear recognition that there are no prospects in purely power-based methods of the state's realization of the objectives which it considers at a given moment to be the priority. The use of force may only be of an educational nature. On just a slightly more significant scale it gradually grows into state tyranny reducing the efficiency of the economy and ultimately plunging it into crisis. The detailed analysis of the history of the USSR in the message was dictated by the aspiration of the head of state to demonstrate an understanding of the lessons of history, the most important of which is the futility of state coercion. Those who view the historical part of the message merely as an attempt at primitive anticommunist rhetoric are making a mistake: From the political viewpoint the appeal to 1991 today is almost as pertinent as to 1913 also, and it is far simpler to use as a target the program of the present-day CPRF.

**Main Method**

How, though, to control the economy without systematic coercion? The message does not give the mechanism directly but its contours are visible—particularly if we compare the message with the action that is being taken. It essentially consists of the consolidation of the economic transactors and the formation of viable financial and industrial groups. The enterprises have endeavored thus far, while utilizing their profits independently, to shift their losses onto the state. In financial and industrial groups the losses are redistributed within the group itself, that is, are shifted not onto the state but onto the former's strongest participants. This facilitates operation of the budget, and the consolidation of the entities simplifies control of them from the purely production engineering viewpoint also.

It is of fundamental importance that, following the emergence from the slump, an opportunity for pursuing a selective industrial policy, about the need for which everyone has spoken, has finally appeared. The opportunity has appeared because in the course of the slump the economy was structurized and its branches were precisely separated into homogeneous groups. The most important of these groups are those that have moved onto the world market and need the assistance of the state to consolidate themselves there (these are enterprises of the fuel and energy complex, iron and steel industry, and chemical industry, in the main), those that are potentially competitive on the world market and are in need of assistance to move onto it (it is chiefly enterprises of mechanical engineering, the military-industrial complex included, which pertain to this category), and, finally, those that are oriented toward the domestic market and are interested only in import restrictions (food and light industry, vehicle manufacturing, and the agro-industrial complex). Understandably, assistance to these three groups of branches differs fundamentally both in terms of its nature and in terms of the possibilities of its scale. As, equally, in terms also of expediency for the future of the entire national economy.

On the whole, public support of the economy will have been alleviated appreciably by the completion of the period of its crisis development: If political stability is preserved, the decline in inflation will bring about a reduction in yield on the financial markets, which, in turn, will squeeze out a considerable part of the capital circulating there into the real sector. As a result, the

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surmounting of the investment crisis will begin, and what is important, furthermore—on the basis of modern technology increasing the efficiency of the Russian economy as a whole.

As the experience of all Western countries without exception shows, a growth of the efficiency of the national economy makes it possible to tackle social problems increasingly assertively. It is this logic that guides the president's message. Of course, the Russian economy is still far from a condition where it can independently finance all the social objectives the state sets itself. But resources for the social reorientation of public spending have appeared even now: With the surmounting of the slump and the consistent discharge of its obligations to international financial organizations trust in Russia has grown, which makes it possible to count in earnest on the attraction of funds from world financial markets, which will be of an order of magnitude cheaper than those attracted within the country.

**Basic Instinct**

There is no doubt that the social fervor of the campaign program, which the message has become to a large extent, was dictated by the political self-preservation instinct. Something else is important also—the same thing is dictated today by purely economic considerations as well.

The lengthy stimulation of exports created a colossal discrepancy between sectors. This was manifested in the growth of social and regional differentiation, which in the first half of 1995 even had created a threat to the integrity of Russian society. The growth of the discrepancy was halted at that time by the introduction of the "currency corridor," which limited the development of the export sector. The differentiation was reduced even, but, as was to have been expected, at a price of the slowing of economic development and a growth of political tension. Locking in such a situation is futile. For this reason the state is addressing the second possibility available to it: the stimulation of the sectors oriented toward the domestic market.

How is this to be done? And is it possible?

Protectionism is costly, and there are not the funds for its implementation on a large scale. A growth of state demand is impossible owing to the state's lack of resources. One thing remains—to increase the capacity of the domestic market thanks to an increase in effective public demand. The movement from crisis to depression makes this possible in principle. Urgent social problems requiring immediate solution place in the hands of the state a specific mechanism of a rise in the living standard and saturation of the market. Thus the social orientation of the message undoubtedly reflects both the demands of the political situation—the need to deprive the communist opponents of the monopoly on social problems—and fundamental regularities of economic development.

It is actions in accordance with them which are the condition of the survival of the state—it is for this reason (despite the fact that the efficiency factor of the president's last message was not that much greater than that of a steam locomotive) that there may be no doubt as to the implementation of the corresponding measures. At the same time it is obvious that the special actions, if only because of the natural change in the conditions of their implementation, will be pursued not entirely as contemplated initially.

**Contours of the Future**

How, roughly, this course will be realized we can imagine on the basis of the experience of the end of 1995 and the start of 1996.

First and foremost—a fight against inflation. An increase in the collectibility of taxes and a tightening of control of the expenditure of budgetary funds—this is fine, but the deterioration in enterprises' financial position is limiting appreciably the possibilities of realization of these goals. In addition, their accomplishment will require the resistance of influential social groups to be overcome. For this reason they will have no immediate effect.

The termination or the curbing of the growth of the prices of the products of natural monopolies or even of all energy sources as a whole would appear to be a realistic resource for limiting inflation. As the experience of the fourth quarter of last year showed, this action is not only possible but also has a salutary effect on the financial state of all of industry. The latter is particularly important inasmuch as an influx of capital into the real sector, on which the main hopes are being placed, may be realized only provided that Boris Yeltsin is successful at the elections. After all, the goal here is the attraction into government securities not of costly domestic but cheap foreign capital, which is considerably more afraid of the communists than it appears to the Zyuganov-lulled Russian man in the street.

The maximum for which Russia can hope prior to the elections is a fine-tuning of the mechanism of the attraction of foreign capital into government securities. Consequently, the system of government securities will, as before, operate in vacuum-cleaner mode, sucking out from the economy potential investment resources

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and not releasing them to the factories, whose financial condition will inspire no particular optimism. An end to the growth of the prices of the products of the natural monopolies and energy sources would be timely and could help industry hold out until the fall, when an influx of foreign capital and a general improvement in the investment climate will facilitate a solution of its problems.

The other direction are the arrears. The struggle against these will, most likely, become a struggle against the debts to the treasury and the delays in the compensation for labor, and eyes will be closed to the nonpayments between enterprises. The center of gravity, evidently, will be the arrears to those on the public payroll, the debts in respect to whom will, evidently, be paid off. But five-sixths of the arrears in respect to compensation for labor pertaining to the enterprises (including those caused by the budget arrears in respect to these enterprises) will remain, most likely, and will unjustifiably be perceived as evidence of a flagrant breach of the promises made by representatives of the state.

A result of the politically conditioned "localization of goals" in the sphere of the nonpayments will be mutual debt-clearing operations between enterprises. This and also an end to the curbing of the prices of the products of the natural monopolies will increase the inflationary surge caused by the December acceleration of the growth of the money supply. Nonetheless, it is pointless fearing this surge: First, a red dawn in the Kremlin threatens the national economy with a far more dreadful upheaval, second, this surge is wholly predictable, and the state has every opportunity to minimize it. Provided, of course, that this is what the present president and the present government do.

**Maksim Sokolov: 'Constituents, Do Not Make a Disturbance...'**

The speech in the defense genre was chosen when the president's message for 1996 was being compiled. The best-known example of this genre, which clearly inspired the Kremlin analysts, is represented by Socrates' apologia—"Gentlemen of Athens, do not make a disturbance."

The choice of apologia could have been dictated by the obvious incongruity in the present situation of the previous genre approaches. The messages of 1994 and 1995 were of a prospective nature, outlining the objectives confronting the country and the authorities and offering the legislators areas of joint work. Three and a half months before the presidential elections the legislators, who are, for the most part, counting on a change of power, are hardly in general in a position to take an interest in Yeltsin's plans geared to so lengthy a timeframe. In the event of victory, the communist opposition intends to make fundamental changes to the entire political and economic system rendering the propositions of the message irrelevant; if the communists are defeated, a Yeltsin elected for a second term will hardly forgo the opportunity to show the communist part of the Duma quite severely who's boss. The genre of prospective message contemplating joint work makes no sense under the conditions of frontal confrontation—whatever its outcome.

Retrospection, a summing up of Yeltsin's rule, that is, is another matter. The red-and-brown opposition has long been operating with the proposition concerning the total bankruptcy of the antipopular regime. One newspaper representing the civil-democratic opposition carried a year ago even a portrait of Yeltsin in an obituary frame with the foot-long verdict: "Guilty before the people, before the Constitution, before history." Given this firmness of these two propositions, going to the elections without a serious attempt to justify oneself before God and people would be equivalent to a frank acknowledgment that Yeltsin's sole motivation is an unslaked thirst for power.

Yeltsin's apologia, extremely necessary before the elections, could be based on two sociocultural models. Roosevelt's "fireside radio chats," in which the U.S. President explained to the citizens the meaning, significance, and justification for his actions, could serve as a model. True, the "fireside chats"—which were pointed out to Yeltsin long since—were regular and weekly, and with us the serious attempt at an apologia was made for virtually the first time in five years, but the answer given here, most likely, will be that it is better late than never. Another explanation is possible also, for that matter—there was in socialist-realist culture the steady genre of the ruler's apologia: A tsar (Ivan IV or Peter I) or general secretary (Stalin) accused of all sins would in an intimate chat explain the entire unprecedented complexity of the tasks which confronted the kingdom and which gave him no opportunity to act in another, pleasanter way. "Tsar as hostage of the historical mission" is a very important myth of Russian culture, whose strength and depth could hardly be disregarded. This also explains the moment of the appearance of the analogy: Russia is not America, and the intimate confession of the ruler is the last and unique weapon, to which it is impossible to resort weekly.

The conversion of the contemporary history of Russia into the principal hero of the president's message creates an important de-ideologizing effect. It is altogether difficult for the effective authorities to fight with ideologues since the opponents talk about different things: the authorities, about politics as the art of the real, ide-

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ologues, about the art of the ideal. Not so much the present much-sinning authorities but even authorities that were seemly European-style would be powerless, playing on the ideological field, to counterpose anything either to the red-and-brown utopia of Zyuganov or the pink-and-green utopia of Yavlinskiy. In arguing for the electorate's favor with those who have already set goals that are untenable in principle, it is pointless thinking up goals that are even less tenable. Another method could prove far more effective: Not to expose the demagogy of the opponents (however logical your arguments, they would, all the same, be ignored with a dismissive reference to the partiality of the exposer) but to leave this matter to the emotional memory of events of the recent past. The "foreboding of civil war," the success of Kabakov's "The Defector," which accurately gauged the public mood, the humanitarian sausages, the tobacco disturbances, the bread lines, the ration-card system, which was becoming universal, the bloody national pogroms (and even earlier—party committees, unpaid Saturday work drives, general enthusiasm, and no more than a kilo each)—this, in fact, is the idyll that has been disrupted by the present regime, this, in fact, was the building foundation for Yavlinskiy's ultra-democratic alternatives. "We forget everything. We remember not true fact or history—only that stock dotted line which they wanted to punch into our memory by incessant repetition. An offensive quality. It hands us over as spoils to liars." For Russia once again to become such easy pickings very little is needed—to regard the glaring imperfections of the present regime sub specie aeternitatis, completely ignoring both what went before and what could be instead.

Of course, the appeal to historical conditionality is dangerous for, if so desired, you could thereby justify whatever you wish. But at a time when utopians are straining after power, promising for the umpteenth time an outlet into extra-historical space, historical determinism results in freedom, and a freedom-loving reluctance to hear about the limitations imposed by history results in a new and dreadful lack of freedom.

...When the land,

from long disorder,
Needs be righted,
Painful is the healing
Of the ancient wounds.
Forcefully must we grasp its parts
To renovate the edifice.
But, by the grace of God,
We have already passed
The inevitable time of suffering,
And the wisdom of the sovereign
Has been recognized by all; merely you alone,
Shuyskiye, are doggedly resisting
And would divert into the olden channel
The new life's shimmering stream!...
...Seven years have now elapsed
Since Tsar Ivan passed away.
And now,
When the blow I cannot parry,
The building of the land,
Barely established,
All for the realm that I have done—
All is crumbling—and we once again will be
Where we were the night that Ivan Vasilich
Passed away...
Count A.K. Tolstoy, "Tsar Ivan Ioannovich"

The present presidential message, which was constructed according to a different principle, was designed to demonstrate the new image of Boris Yeltsin—the president. He is acting not only as the leader of the state disclosing his plans for the coming year and establishing the framework of the economic and political course. For the first time since the appearance of Mikhail Gorbachev's book "Perestroyka and New Thinking for the USSR and the World" an attempt has been made to present the head of state not so much as the formidable (or, on the contrary, gracious) ruler as a thinker capable of analyzing the lessons of the past and building on this basis a policy oriented toward the future. How apposite for Russian conditions this move will prove and how it will be reflected in the course of the president's election campaign it is at this time impossible to tell. But it is noticeable that for the first time the message of the head of state to parliament approximated the form that is accepted in the country of origin of the message—a talk of the head of state to his people.

Boris Yeltsin is the first participant in the presidential race to have formulated in detail his campaign positions, which, contrary to expectations, are neither too left nor dangerously right. Assiduously shaping his political image of calm and balanced centrist, the presidential candidate is trying to influence as wide an audience of the electorate as possible. What is new compared with previous years is the president's emphasis on his pragmatism. The actions of the pragmatist, according to the text of the message, have in all the foregoing years been subordinated not to a desire to implant in the country an imported Western ideology and not to a thirst for personal power but to an objective regularity of society's development. The problem is how to compel the mass voter to believe that it is this regularity that dictates the historical necessity for Yeltsin's reelection.

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Will the electorate heed the assiduously rationalized arguments or, seized by a thirst for social revanche, will it conceive the idea not of further creation but of a new division of property and conversion of the principle of an equal start into a guarantee of a simultaneous finish? Whatever the case, "freedom is the right to be foolish, if you wish," and Russia has acquired this freedom. The question is: What does it want?

## Federal Assembly

### Russia: Deputies Describe Duma 'Bomb Scare'

*MM2103112596 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1*

[Report by Yevgeniy Popov: "Threatening Gesture"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last Sunday and then on Monday mysterious events took place in Moscow which caused foreign analysts to make associations with the notorious OPUS, that is the special procedure for administering the country which Russian Federation President B.N. Yeltsin planned to introduce exactly three years ago — 20 March 1993. As though in celebration of this anniversary the Kremlin authorities, according to reports by the BBC and other Western radio voices, last weekend put elite military subunits put on heightened alert again. In response to the statement by the Communists' leader G.A. Zyuganov about possible acts of provocation from "hotheads" in the president's entourage there followed a "television denial," but a rather strange one: Boris Nikolayevich made a joke of it — he said that Zyuganov had no need to worry or to "drive to work in an armored personnel carrier," but the president looked uncertain and his expression confirmed rather than belied the words he uttered [as published]. At any rate some Western commentators saw a certain cause and effect link in the chain of a whole series of events which have taken place in the Russian capital since the decrees on the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements adopted by the State Duma 15 March this year.

On Wednesday 20 March at a State Duma plenary session the deputies tried to lift the shroud of secrecy from some mysterious occurrences in the capital, including in the Duma building itself. After a question from Deputy S.N. Reshulskiy about "what bombs and radioactive containers" the internal troops subunits were seeking last Sunday in the Duma building, his colleagues who had witnessed very strange "military exercises in the Duma" shared their observations.

Here are a few fragments from the stenographic record of the session:

"Chilingarov: On Sunday at 1800 hours I received a telephone call from the duty officer for the State Duma saying they were looking for a bomb in the premises. I went along since I am officially responsible for collaboration with these structures. I was not allowed into the Duma. They said they had orders not to admit the deputies. I had to display the utmost firmness to call in responsible figures.... I went up the duty officer and asked for information. Yes, it was true, the dogs were wandering around looking for a bomb.... At that time I met here the leadership of the Moscow main internal affairs administration and the main administration of the president's guard who said that in addition there were terrorists in the Moscow region and it was not out of the question that they would have to defend themselves and organize the building's defense.... I went back once more but they no longer let me into the State Duma...."

"Gusev: I came to work at 0650 hours on Monday.... I was met by young men in police uniform..... They said in response to my question that there was a high level of radiation in the building and they had been ordered to let no one in. I spent 10 minutes talking with the military.... There were a great many of them, I think there were several hundred armed men standing outside the building...."

The discussions led to the point where the deputies were given leave on Monday.

So that they would go home....

"Danilova... at 0340 hours I was in the State Duma building.... I was asked to leave the building. I am not a military person but how can you explain this: If a bomb had been planted why was the area around the State Duma not cordoned off? Everyone was walking around calmly...."

"Kulik: I think that we are missing something here and I would suggest that we adopt a special decree for such cases: Who has the right in these situations to enter the State Duma unimpeded? The point is that I can state that I have been looking for a bomb in the State Duma for a week and no one will be able to check this and no one will be able to deny it...."

"Nesterov: Esteemed colleagues! Everything we have heard gives grounds for thinking of more serious things. It is essential immediately to secure for the State Duma and indeed for the Federation Council the rights of a corporate body and independence in backing up the activity of Russia's representative power.

"Aparina:...The situation is very serious and in this connection, Gennadiy Nikolayevich, I have a suggestion: You should get in touch with the president, act as the initiator, meet with him, and discuss these questions. What are we waiting for? For submachine-gunners to appear? They will talk a different language!...

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"Lysenko: Esteemed colleagues! On Sunday at 0130 I was to have had a meeting in the Federation Council. I went to the Federation Council and it was cordoned off. I was told that a bomb had been planted there and no one was being allowed into the Federation Council....

"Chair: Esteemed deputies! Let us extract the dry gist of what we have been saying: We should instruct the Security Committee, the Committee for Organizing the Work of the Duma, and Artur Nikolayevich Chilingarov, who officially is responsible for all our mobilization problems, to prepare a State Duma draft decree on this mater. I shall try to get in touch with the president today...."

As far as the "dry gist" is concerned then the world news agencies have linked the fact that the Taman and Kantemir divisions, the brigade in Teplyy Stan, and special officers' formations based on the division named for Dzerzhinskiy were put on heightened combat alert with the scenarios of "hotheads" in the president's entourage who, fearing for their future if the left-wing forces' candidates win the presidential elections, wanted on plausible pretexts to defer or repeal the elections and declare a state of emergency in the country. And in the same context Radio France International comments on the speeches of several Federation Council senators who suggested that the presidential elections be deferred and reports: "In this connection the Communist leader Zyuganov accused Yeltsin of trying to wreck the June elections and preparing another coup d'etat."

It is possible that something will be added to the "dry gist" by the "information leak" (most likely deliberate) that is now traditional in such cases from sources close to the presidential structures and by all kinds of rumors which inevitably arise when there is a shortage of official information. The editorial office of the newspaper DEN has information that on the morning of Monday 18 March a conference with Yeltsin in the Kremlin discussed the possibility of introducing a state of emergency and that the draft edict was allegedly already prepared but one minister objected to the president that such measures would be unconstitutional, noting the dissolution of the Duma and the ban on the Communist Party of the Russian Federation would be considered unconstitutional acts by General Prosecutor Skuratov and Constitutional Court Chairman Tumanov, who did not take part in the work of the conference. And in response the president allegedly noted angrily, in his usual manner, that in this country it is for him to decide what is constitutional and what is not. So under the conditions of a shortage of information there are reports which, DEN says, were received "from sources close to the president's administration." If these are rumors then they are very similar to the rumors which the Chinese call authentic reports but ones which have not come directly but by a circuitous route....

**Russia: Senators Debate Duma USSR Revival Decrees**

*MM2003155296 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 1*

[Report by Lyubov Tsukanova: "Senators Seek Way Out of Impasse Created by Duma"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma 15 March 1996 decrees in fact reviving the Soviet Union were yesterday the subject of fierce debate in the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council. The Duma decisions were sharply criticized by North Ossetia President Akhsarbek Galazov, Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak, and Anatoliy Sliva, the Russian Federation president's representative in the Federation Council.

The reason for the prompt examination of these documents by parliament's upper chamber was the letter from Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin to the Federation Council in which the head of state draws the senators' attention to the fact that the adoption of these decrees introduces uncertainty to the procedure for adopting laws and other very important state decisions. "Such actions by the State Duma undermine the unity of state power in the Russian Federation," the letter says, and it is the seriousness of this fact which is the motive for the head of state's appeal to parliament's upper chamber.

The Duma 15 March decisions, the president's reaction to them, and yesterday's debate in the Federation Council have become a test of strength for the constitutional structures of power in Russia. The president resolutely refused to treat the Duma decision as an innocent election actions (which several senators condescendingly suggested), seeing in it a profound and far-reaching political hidden agenda. The question was whether the Federation Council would share the serious concern of the president as guarantor of the Russian Federation Constitution and the state's unity? Can the country's population be certain that the authorities' reserve of strength is sufficient to guarantee Russia against another upheaval?

Yesterday's debate in the Federation Council showed that in the upper chamber there is no unanimity on this question: A number of speakers, primarily leaders of the representative organs of power, in fact supported the Duma decisions without concealing their sympathies for their inspirer — the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] faction in the State Duma. Here

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they tried to place responsibility for destabilizing the situation in the country on the wrong person, accusing the president's entourage of causing a "political uproar." But the majority of senators shared the head of state's concern.

North Ossetia President Akhsarbek Galazov urged that the situation should not be oversimplified as some of his colleagues were trying to do. I am sure, he said, that the State Duma deputies knew the true legal force of the documents they have adopted. The calculation was primarily a political one and its results are already having an effect. Society is perturbed, the reaction of the leaders of the neighboring countries is known. Neither the State Duma deputies nor the Federation Council, Galazov believes, should allow themselves to use Russia's interests in a political game or to gain dividends in the election campaign.

Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov expressed himself even more sharply, calling the State Duma decision an act of political subversion, especially dangerous in that it emanates not from a political or public organization but from one of the chambers of parliament, that is from a state structure. The Duma's action destroys Russia's already created statehood and it is impermissible to oversimplify this or tone it down or cover it up. Two other serious consequences of the decrees adopted by the Duma, Yuriy Luzhkov said, are the generation of distrust toward Russia in the CIS countries and the undermining of its prestige in the world community. All this not only fails to promote the further integration of the CIS countries, it impedes them.

Anatoliy Sobchak, the mayor of St. Petersburg, reminded his colleagues who saw "nothing bad" in the State Duma decrees of the history of the destruction of the Union, pointing to the unconscientious nature of those who are blaming not the real culprits, that is the ruling clique of the CPSU and the USSR, which undermined the signing of a new union treaty, but "the three presidents." From the legal viewpoint the Duma documents are cunningly compiled, Anatoliy Sobchak said. For all their apparent "innocuousness" they could have unpredictable legal consequences. The Duma decision means the torpedoing of the integration process, Anatoliy Sobchak believes.

The majority of senators voiced the opinion that the State Duma should review its decisions in order to avoid creating a precedent for the violation of constitutional procedure in making legislative decisions and for disregarding the prerogatives of the president and Federation Council. But the senators voiced the opinion that if the lower chamber of parliament does not accept the warnings of the president and Federation Council then the upper chamber should appeal to the Constitutional Court. Here, as Anatoliy Sliva, the Russian Federation president's representative in the Federation Council, said, he is in no doubt as to the ruling which the Constitutional Court will make. The Duma decision so seriously affects the foundations of the constitutional system and the international law personality of the Russian Federation that this could have the relevant political consequences, especially under conditions when the process of the establishment of Russian statehood is under way and the "smoothing over" of interstate relations and ties both within the former Union and with other countries, particularly considering Russia's admission to the Council of Europe. Anatoliy Sliva drew attention to the fact that the recent Duma decisions are no accident, they are links in the chain of other decisions like the decree on the protection of the USSR state flag and amendments to the law on international treaties.

**Russia: Duma Communists Have 'No Intention of Making Concessions'**

*MM2103113496 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 2*

[Report by Sergey Chugayev: "Yabloko Tries To Dismiss Duma Speaker"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Contrary to expectations, the 20 March State Duma session did not reconsider the question of the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya agreements. That can be considered its response to the Federation Council's decision, the president's appeal, and the reaction in the near and far abroad.

Only the first attempts in the current Duma to attack its speaker can be deemed a slight response to the results of the 15 March vote.

The "Russia Is Our Home" faction cited G. Seleznev's statement 16 March (justifying the actions taken by the parliament's Communist majority), accusing the Duma speaker of political bias and of embroiling the Russian parliament in the presidential election campaign. The faction threatened to raise the question of Seleznev's dismissal.

The "Yabloko" faction went further and asked for the issue of G. Seleznev's dismissal as Duma chairman to be included on the agenda. According to Ye. Mizulina, there are at least three grounds for this. First, G. Seleznev changed the text of the Duma decision on the Belovezhskaya agreements without permission. Second, on his instructions deputies have begun to be issued with ID cards on which the Russian two-headed eagle has been replaced with a picture of the Duma building bearing the USSR's coat of arms on its facade. Third,

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during a 19 March NTV appearance the speaker said that the 250 deputies who voted in favor of this denunciation knew that they were breaking the law and deliberately did so. Ye. Mizulina thinks that this makes the Duma an illegitimate body.

The "Yabloko" representative was immediately rebutted by the Communists. V. Ilyukhin, chairman of the Security Committee, said that the changes to the text of the decree made by Seleznev after the Duma had adopted the document do not change its essence. As for the two-headed eagle, this emblem is illegal, according to Ilyukhin, since it has not been approved by the Duma.

The "Yabloko" proposal, as could easily be imagined, was not passed; only 88 deputies voted in favor.

As for the Federation Council's appeal to the State Duma to return to the issue of the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya agreements, it was pointedly ignored. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation faction rejected Deputy E. Pamfilova's proposal to begin discussing it. The discussion of the document has been postponed indefinitely.

It is quite obvious that the Communists, who form the majority in the Duma, have no intention of making concessions and have provided another indication of their willingness for confrontation. They are telling the opposing sides — the Federation Council and the president — to make the next move to step up the confrontation. We will learn in the near future what these moves will be.

**Russia: Left-Wing Factions Statement Supports Duma Decrees**

*MM2003182696 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1*

[Statement by "Communist Party of the Russian Federation" faction, Agrarian Deputies' Group and "People's Power" Deputies' Group: "The Peoples Themselves Must Decide"]

[FBIS Translated Text] 20 March 1996 — The "Communist Party of the Russian Federation," the Agrarian deputies' group, and the "People's Power" deputies' group cannot fail to heed the political fuss which has been raised over the decrees adopted by the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma "on the intensification of the integration of the peoples who were united in the USSR and the repeal of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet 12 December 1991 decree" and "on the legal force for the Russian Federation-Russia of the results of the 17 March 1991 USSR referendum on the question of the conservation of the USSR."

We believe that this fuss is aimed at diverting attention from the country's socioeconomic plight, artificially creating a political crisis, wrecking the presidential elections, and drawing fire away from the true destroyers of the union state.

The opponents of these documents believe that the decrees were adopted by the Duma with a view to intensifying the confrontation before the presidential elections. But that is not so. The Duma decisions are directly connected with the mandates which the deputies received in the 1993 and 1995 election campaigns. Thousands and thousands of resolutions from voters' meetings contained demands to repeal the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements. That was why for over two years now the State Duma deputies have repeatedly submitted proposals for the examination of this issue. At the end of the work of the Duma of the last convocation over 200 deputies voted for these proposals.

Representatives of the present authorities state that the decrees adopted by the Duma prevent the peoples' further integration. But here they do not cite the official texts of the decrees, which open the way to the intensification of the integration processes which have begun. It is a case of the peoples' movement along the path of increasing unification mentioned by the presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus during their last meeting.

Critics of the step taken by the State Duma state that the Duma is trying to arrogate the powers of the entire Federal Assembly as a whole, deeming the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet decree on the denunciation of the Union Treaty to have lost its force. The Duma decrees express the opinion of one of the Russian parliament's chambers regarding the fact that the RSFSR Supreme Soviet decree was adopted with the grossest violations of the USSR Constitution in operation at the time, the RSFSR Constitution, and the will of the peoples expressed at the 17 March 1991 referendum.

Moreover, this decree violated the well-known Vienna convention which does not allow the denunciation of treaties when the texts of the treaties do not provide for such a procedure. The point is that the treaty on the formation of the USSR was from the outset not an international document but a constitutional act of a constituent nature and did not presuppose any denunciation.

The State Duma documents do not encroach in the slightest on the sovereignty of the CIS states or on the voluntary and gradual nature of their mutually advantageous rapprochement. So the statements of a number of CIS states' leaders regarding the decrees

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adopted by the Duma are of an emotional rather than a legal nature.

The faction and deputies' groups stress once again very clearly that the decrees adopted by the State Duma have one single aim — opening up space for the consistent, voluntary integration of the fraternal peoples while preserving the sovereignty of the states formed on the territory of the Soviet Union.

We have stood and continue to stand for the resurrection of our peoples' state unity in any mutually acceptable forms and we believe that these questions have been resolved and will be resolved only by the peoples themselves, who are firmly linked by many centuries of fraternal cooperation.

[Signed] G.A. Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation,
N.M. Kharitonov, leader of the Agrarian deputies' group,
N.I. Ryzhkov, leader of the "People's Power" deputies' group.

**Russia: Upper House May Reconsider Duma Denunciation of CIS Accord**

*LD2003201396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (INTERFAX) - If the State Duma, Russian parliament's lower house, fails to revise its decision to denounce the 1991 Belovezh Accords on disbanding the USSR and founding the CIS, the Federation Council, parliament's upper house, retains the right to reconsider this subject, Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev said in an appeal to senators Wednesday.

The upper house has sent its deputy chairmen to the State Duma where they will represent the Federation Council during the debate on this problem, Stroyev said.

Federation Council members do not discount the possibility that, if the lower house disagrees with the upper house, the Federation Council may request the president to submit an inquiry to the Constitutional Court, Stroyev said.

"The Federation Council cannot lag behind any other body. It has and will have its own face," Stroyev said.

At the same time, he urged senators not to "forestall" developments because the State Duma "promised to make a normal decision."

Stroyev also said that the president had submitted to the State Duma a draft law regarding legal stability and confirming Russia's international obligations.

**Russia: Duma Will Not Debate Council, Yeltsin Motions on CIS Vote**

*LD2103123996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1057 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (INTERFAX) — The State Duma will not debate either the appeal of the Federation Council or the bill initiated by President Boris Yeltsin, both of which came in reaction to the Duma resolution of March 15 effectively denouncing the Belovezh Accords, at its March 22 plenary session, Security Committee Chairman Viktor Ilyukhin (the Communist faction) told Interfax on Thursday after a meeting of the Duma Council.

The Federation Council's appeal to the Duma contains a proposal to reconsider the March 15 resolution.

Yeltsin's bill proposes a confirmation of the agreement on the creation of the CIS and of the Russian parliament's resolution denouncing the treaty on the formation of the Soviet Union. The president proposes that "the bill be considered first."

Neither the appeal of the Federation Council nor the president's bill will be debated by deputies at the Duma plenary session unless they are debated first in the committees and factions, Ilyukhin said. "Such is the procedure that we should observe," he said.

"There is an inappropriate subjective fuss over the way in which the Duma is allegedly dodging the debate," he said.

"Hastiness in this case may suggest that the absolutely wise ideas initiated by the president will be rejected because they will not be studied thoroughly," said Ilyukhin.

The deputies will begin discussion of the appeal of the Federation Council and the presidential bill on Thursday in their factions, he said.

After the Duma plenary session on March 22, the deputies will go to their electoral districts. The next plenary session is planned for April 3.

## Regional Affairs

**Russia: Livshits: 32 Regions Receive Funds for Overdue Wages**

*LD2003150296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0905 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian president's aide Aleksandr Livshits said today that funds to repay overdue wages and social subsidies had been sent to 32 Russian regions.

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According to the information at his disposal, over the past twenty four hours ten more regions have been added to 22 other regions where the necessary funds had been remitted in full.

Livshits, who is in charge of economic issues, similar to the practice of the past few days provided information about the progress of the realization of the presidential plan on financial support to regions aimed at the repayment of an outstanding budgetary debt to workers of the budgetary sector, children's allowances and other social benefits, the presidential press service reported.

By March 20, the necessary funds coordinated 100 percent with regional heads, have been allocated in full to 32 regions, Livshits said.

According to Livshits, the necessary funds have been remitted to the Kirov region (80.2 billion rbs [rubles]), the Koryak autonomous region (31.0 billion rbs), the Magadan region (59.7 billion rbs) the Orenburg region (35.5 billion rbs), the Ryazan region (11.9 billion rbs) the Sakhalin region (92.4 billion rbs) North Ossetia (111,0 billion rbs) [as received], the Tver region (42.1 billion rbs), the Tomsk region (45,5 billion rbs) [as received], Chuvashia (34.8 billion rbs.)

**Russia: Yeltsin Speaks on Powersharing Agreement With Komi Republic**

*LD2003212896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1735 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no place-name or date as received] (INTERFAX) —The northern autonomous Republic of Komi signed a power sharing agreement with Moscow on Wednesday becoming the eighth Russian autonomy to do so for the time being.

"Komi can now display maximum independence and use its wealth of mineral resources to solve outstanding social issues in the region," President Boris Yeltsin said speaking at the signing ceremony.

He also spoke of Komi saddling itself with the heavy burden of responsibility for its own development. But he said Russia would not leave the Republic to face-to-face with its own problems. Yeltsin said the Federation would help develop the region's industrial and social infrastructures to enable Komi not only to survive in adverse climatic conditions, but also preserve "the harmony and beauty" of local surroundings.

He is confident that Komi will serve as an example of public peace at what he called "these hard times."

The president spoke of Moscow's pledge to finance housing construction for people willing to resettle elsewhere in the country.

On the same day, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Komi Republican Head Yuriy Spiridonov met in Moscow to sign a package of eight agreements as part of the outline political treaty between Moscow and the Republic. These deal with property relations and assets, foreign trade and international contacts, the energy and farming sectors, budget relations and regulation of social and employment issues.

Speaking afterwards, Chernomyrdin expressed fears of a possible rollback of the power sharing process if the Communists came in power.

Referring to the Russian Communist party's program, Chernomyrdin said it proclaims, among other things, nationalization of property and strict central control over the regions. He said the Communists "offer nothing new" in the area of social and economic relations."

He emphasized that the agreements signed with Komi were aimed precisely at implementing the constitutional provisions for granting more say on the ground and consolidating federal relations.

**Russia: Constitutional Crisis Breaks Out in Dagestan**

*LD2103103096 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0900 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A constitutional crisis has broken out in Dagestan after the parliament took a decision to prolong the powers of the state council — the Republic's supreme executive body — for two years. The constitution of Dagestan does not envisage any prolongation of powers. Mukhu Aliyev, speaker of the parliament, stated that today at an extraordinary session deputies will try to find a way out of the crisis and adopt necessary amendments and addenda to the main law.

In the meantime, some ethnic movements, including the Avars movement, which is one of the most influential movements, are planning to hold protest rallies in Makhachkala today and tomorrow. The Union of the Muslims of Russia has stated that it now opposes the present leadership of Dagestan.

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**Russia: North Ossetians Threaten To Kill Returning Ingushi Refugees**

*LD2103120396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1148 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[By Valeriy Shanayaev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VLADIKAVKAZ March 21 (ITAR-TASS) — Residents of the North Ossetian settlement of Tarskoye threatened to kill 27 families of returning Ingushi refugees, who fled the village after an interethnic armed conflict in 1992, and Russian mediator of the settlement between the two neighbouring republics in the Caucasus asked President Boris Yeltsin to interfere.

The situation has "sharply aggravated" in the villages of the Prigorodny region of North Ossetia where Ingushi refugees are returning as it has been agreed, Vladimir Lozovoy said on North Ossetian TV on Thursday and requested Yeltsin to hold consultations with the leaders of North Ossetia and Ingushetia, Akhsarbek Galazov and Ruslan Aushev, who are also Federation Council members and are in Moscow at present.

According to Lozovoy, who is the chairman of the interim state committee of Russia for the settlement of the interethnic conflict, North Ossetian authorities prohibited the 27 Ingushi families from returning to Tarskoye as they could not ensure their security. The families are thus staying in the open near the North Ossetian settlement of Chermen on the border with Ingushetia.

On March 11 residents of Tarskoye also blocked a convoy with Ingushi refugees with their prefabricated houses from entering the settlement. Lozovoy said prosecutors were investigating the incident at present.

Lozovoy criticised North Ossetian authorities for lack of coordination with Russian Interior troops which accompany Ingushi refugees returning to North Ossetia.

**Russia: Maritime Kray Needs Bank Loan To Pay Teachers**

*LD2003130596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1128 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By Yevgenia Lents]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VLADIVOSTOK, March 20 (ITAR-TASS) — Teachers and other workers on government payroll in the Maritime Territory, Russian Far East, started receiving wage arrears on Wednesday.

Itar-Tass learnt at the Maritime territory administration that territorial authorities took a 100-billion-rouble loan from the ONEXIM bank to make these payments. This money will be enough to pay wage arrears to workers on the government payroll up to last January.

The remaining sums will be paid out over the next few days after local authorities receive funds from the federal budget, which are to be transferred to localities by the end of March.

Taking into account an extremely tense social situation in the public education system in the Maritime Territory, authorities decided to pay out, above all, to teachers to prevent hunger and other strikes at kindergartens and general educational schools.

The next on the line will be medics and workers of all other budgetary sectors in the Maritime Territory, who have not received salaries at least from last December.

## Economic Issues

**Russia: Dubinin Attack Linked to Criminal Banking Interests**

*MK2003145396 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 pp 1-2*

[Report by Rustam Narzikulov under the general headline: "The Apartment of the Russian Federation Central Bank Chairman Came Under Fire. Somebody May Be Warning Sergey Dubinin and His Subordinates About More Unpleasant Things To Come"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The attack on the Central Bank chairman is without precedent. Thus far the criminal world has not dared to openly threaten the life of the head of the country's main monetary institution. In a conversation with NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, Central Bank Deputy Chairman Konstantin Lubenchenko assessed the attack as an attempt to pressure the Central Bank chairman.

None of NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's interlocutors, prominent in the banking world, whom the paper asked to comment on the incident had any doubts that the attack had been organized by criminal structures.

The most plausible theory explaining the causes of the attack boils down to this: The new Central Bank chairman, who was appointed in November 1995, sees it as one of his main tasks to deal with "problem banks" that are on the verge of bankruptcy. At the end of last year the Central Bank began to work out documents allowing for the assessment of the financial condition of commercial banks to a high degree of reliability.

According to reliable sources, the Central Bank even drew up something like a list of absolutely hopeless banks that are facing full liquidation.

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Even so, until recently problem banks did not feel any fear over the prospect of bankruptcy, even managing to benefit from their poor financial situation. Owing to imperfect legislation, of the 326 problem banks, only 16 have been closed. The remaining 310 banking institutions continue to operate and, according to some reports, clients are using criminal groups to squeeze their money out of these banks.

A number of problem banks are used for the expropriation of budgetary funds. By preliminary agreement, budgetary funds are remitted to the account of a bankrupt bank, "disappear," and are then shared out between the depositor and the bank in question.

In order to finalize the abolition of bankrupt banks, the Central Bank recently submitted to the Duma a draft law on the bankruptcy of credit institutions. The Central Bank in particular is promoting pre-liquidation procedures — the effective freezing of a bank's activity before the moment the court will deem it bankrupt. You can well imagine the scale of damage Sergey Dubinin would cause problem banks should he realize his program to fight against pseudo-bankruptcies.

It is not ruled out that the discontent of the criminal world could have been aroused by the effective ban on individual decision-making concerning the issue of loans by Central Bank top officials. At present the decision to extend a loan at an officially established refinancing rate, or to provide assistance to a particular commercial bank, is under the jurisdiction of the Credit Committee which, apart from Dubinin, includes Central Bank Deputy Chairmen Sergey Aleksashenko, Andrey Kozlov, Aleksandr Potemkin, and a number of other Central Bank officials.

Should something unpredictable happen to the Central Bank chairman, rendering him unable to perform his duties, then, under the law, the position of the Central Bank chairman will be taken up by one of his three first deputies. Under the Central Bank's in-house rules the administration of the bank is taken over by Sergey Aleksashenko in Dubinin's absence. In this event he is obligated to assume the chairman's functions immediately, in order to avert unforeseen situations, say, on the T-bill market, where the turnover runs into trillions of rubles.

And one final thing: According to our poll, by 1600 yesterday approximately 80 percent of the bankers we surveyed did not know anything about the attack on the Central Bank head. For a country with a developed market economy the fact that the figure of the National Bank chairman is inconspicuous is a positive feature because it points to the efficiency of the money regulation system. Yet, in the case of Russia, indifference toward the Central Bank has a different character.

**Russia: Defense Official Cites Military-Industrial 'Crisis'**

*LD2003163796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1107 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (INTERFAX) — The Russian military-industrial complex remains in crisis, and the rates of its recession, which somehow lessened in 1995, have started to increase again, deputy head of the Russian Defense Industry Committee's economic department Vitaliy Vitebskiy told Interfax. He was commenting on the work of defense plants in February 1996.

Vitebskiy said the overall output of the defense industry continued to drop in February 1996 and reached 81.7 percent of the February 1995 level.

Larger production was reported only by the arms industry (a four percent increase as compared to February 1995) and the Energiya plant in Voronezh, whose output grew 4.2 percent.

Production recession hit hardest in the shipbuilding industry (34 percent as compared to February 1995), the radio industry (26.1 percent), electronics (24 percent) and the ammunition industry (23.1 percent).

Civilian products of defense plants amounted to only 75.6 percent of the February 1995 level, while the military output reached 96.9 percent. The civilian production drop was largest in the ammunition industry (by 47.6 percent), the radio industry (36.6 percent), the aerospace industry (26.8 percent), the armament industry (49.6 percent).

The number of personnel employed at Russian defense plants dropped by 14.1 percent as compared to January 1995. Their average salary did not exceed 462,000 rubles (less than $100) as against the average Russian salary of 658,000 rubles (about $130).

By the time Russia holds its presidential elections, slated for June 16, it may fully lose its defense industry, said Vitebskiy.

**Russia: Official: Money for Wages Often Used in Other Ways**

*LD2103113396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1105 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[By Nadezhda Anisimova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (ITAR-TASS) — The money intended for paying wages is

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often used for granting interest-free or easy-term loans, for paying credit debts and for meeting personal needs of the managerial staff, Vladimir Varov, head of the Federal Labour Inspectorate under the Russian Ministry of Labour, told Tass. According to their information, the Rostovugol joint-stock company spent 100 billion roubles not the way it was initially intended, while the company's wage debts amount to 113.9 billion roubles. The tense situation with wage debts induced the Federal Labour Inspectorate to conduct some 3,000 inspections between March 5 and 15, in the course of which 5,000 cases of the violation of laws on wage payment were found.

In the opinion of Vladimir Varov, "illegal actions of many commercial banks, which break time limits for the fulfilment of orders of their clients concerning the transfer of money to the budget" are one of the reasons for the destabilisation of the economic situation. Numerous facts of delays with the transfer of tax payments were also found. This is connected, in the first place, with he crisis situation in the banking system in general, with incompetence and outright abuse of office by some banking workers, Varov believes.

He said that administrative and criminal proceedings had been instituted against those who grossly violated wage payment regulations. Thus, 125 materials for instituting criminal proceedings in connection with especially serious violations were sent to the public prosecutor's offices from January 1 to March 15, this year, and on 20 cases criminal proceedings have already been instituted.

**Russia: Moscow Adopts Federal Special-Purpose Employment Program**

*LD2103111996 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] At its sitting today the Russian Government adopted a federal special-purpose program on helping the population to find jobs in 1996-97. In the opinion of Fedor Prokopov, head of the Federal Employment Service, in the event of its being implemented, starting from 1997 the number of new jobs being created may exceed the number of workers made redundant. Our correspondent notes that the program pays great attention to improving the skills of employees.

Summing up the results of today's discussion, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin noted the need to draw up individual programs for difficult regions and industries. In his opinion, special attention should be paid to the defense industry.

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## International Affairs

### Ukraine: National Security Council Official on Joining NATO

*LD2003152496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1449 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Mikhail Melnik and Raisa Stetsyura]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 20 — "It is too early and not serious to speak about Ukraine's admission to NATO. We do not meet 69 per cent of demands of that military bloc, required for membership," Vladimir Gorbulin, Secretary of the National Security Council at the Ukrainian president, told a news conference on Wednesday.

He said "Ukraine is doing its utmost in order to have a 'special relationship' with NATO." Gorbulin noted Ukraine's close cooperation with NATO, politically and technologically, particularly in the aerospace areas. "NATO should regard Ukraine as a stable country. In its turn, Ukraine relations with NATO are the indication of how Ukraine is assessed in Europe," Gorbulin said.

### Ukraine: Security Council Official: Duma Decision 'Unprecedented'

*LD2003154296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1458 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[By Mikhail Melnik and Raisa Stetsyura]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — "The decision of the Russian State Duma to abrogate the Belovezhe agreements is an unprecedented, but will prepared, move," a high-ranking Ukrainian official said.

Vladimir Gorbulin, the secretary of the Ukrainian president's National Security Council, said at a press conference in Kiev on Wednesday that "although the leaders of all CIS countries said that the decision is not binding on them, it will have certain political consequences all the same."

"The State Duma's decision makes the world look at Russia in a different way," Gorbulin said, adding that if Russian President Boris Yeltsin decided "to resort to coercive methods" in this situation, "it would play into the hands of the communists."

Ukraine is not going to change its status in the CIS and should not join the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (an organisation which includes parliamentarians of the majority of CIS states), he said.

Gorbulin believes that at their extraordinary meeting (proposed on Tuesday by Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze) the CIS leaders should say that "events in Russia should not affect the independence of the CIS states" and that "it is necessary to influence the State Duma in order to make it review its divisions."

### Ukraine: Udovenko: Country Concerned About Being NATO 'Buffer'

*AU2103125396 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 20 Mar 96 p 8*

[Interview with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko by Jiri Doubrava in Kiev on 19 March: "Ukraine Is Worried That It Will Become a Buffer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Ukraine does not intend in any way to follow Belarus in its attempts to restore with Russia the Soviet Union, said Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko yesterday shortly before the arrival in Kiev of his U.S. counterpart Christopher. Udovenko also said in an interview with Czech journalists that the North Atlantic Alliance's enlargement toward the East may not be beneficial for Ukraine, but, as opposed to Russia, his country will not raise any protests.

[Doubrava] What do you think about the entry of the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary into the North Atlantic Alliance?

[Udovenko] No country outside of NATO has the right to veto or prevent anyone from gaining admission wherever they want. But, on the other hand, we are concerned that we will become a buffer. We are opposed to bloc politics and we do not want to join any military bloc. Of course, if the Alliance were extended to our borders, we would find ourselves where we do not want to be. Naturally, this worries us.

[Doubrava] What are the main sources of your concerns?

[Udovenko] Some irresponsible politicians in the countries aspiring to join the North Atlantic Alliance have talked about the deployment of nuclear weapons. This provoked disillusionment in Ukraine. We met our commitments last year and got rid of nuclear weapons. And, now nuclear weapons could come almost all the way up to our borders. Moreover, everyone should realize how expensive it is for us to get rid of nuclear missiles. It is many times more expensive to eliminate this weapon than it is to produce it. There are whole underground cities in our country that no one knows what to do with.

[Doubrava] Your neighbor Belarus has opted for the closest possible integration with Russia.

[Udovenko] We are promoting our own independent policy. We will not follow this path. Of all the former states of the Soviet Union, only Ukraine decided on independence in a referendum and we are bound by the

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nation's decision. Nostalgia among some people for the former Soviet Union under the difficult conditions of economic reform can be understood, but, for us, there is no way back. Apart from this, it is necessary to bear in mind that Russia awaits presidential elections and some of the pronouncements being made there contain elements of purely campaign rhetoric. The main problem is the Russian mentality — they simply cannot reconcile themselves to the fact that Ukraine is independent.

**Ukraine: Christopher Backs Kiev's Sovereignty in Light of Duma Vote**

*MK2003145496 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 4*

[Report by Viktor Zamyatin: "The United States Can Guarantee Ukraine's Independence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A couple of years ago few were surprised by frequent meetings between the U.S. secretary of state and the Russian leadership. Today the frequent contacts between Warren Christopher and Ukraine's leaders are seen to be just as commonplace. Both sides stated that his one-day visit to Ukraine on 19 March was the continuation of an active dialogue between Kiev and Washington.

The list of subjects for negotiations with the U.S. secretary of state in Kiev were quite traditional: Ukrainian-U.S. and Ukrainian-Russian relations, NATO expansion, Ukraine's participation in the Partnership for Peace program, and, finally, the United States' further participation in reforming Ukraine's economy and assisting Ukraine in receiving compensation for the tactical nuclear weapons evacuated in 1992 (according to various sources, the sum of Kiev's claims on Moscow is between $500 million and $700 million). Yet, something new has also appeared. Presumably, Christopher did not intend to time his visit to Kiev to coincide with the Russian State Duma decree repealing the Belovezhskaya Forest Agreements. It is simply that another item was added to the U.S. secretary of state's agenda and an extra cause appeared for him to say how the United States is interested in the existence of an independent Ukraine. And Christopher used this cause. The U.S. secretary of state described the Duma decision as irresponsible, stressing that Ukraine and other republics of the former USSR are independent states and that any attempt to revise their status "will arouse condemnation by the world community." Christopher chose not to elaborate on possible retaliatory moves by the West to the Communists' attempt in the Russian State Duma to disrupt the status quo across the space of the former USSR. Leonid Kuchma did that for him, saying that Ukraine intends to discuss with the United States prospects for closer cooperation with NATO. The Ukrainian president also shared the opinion aired in the Russian media that the State Duma's decision will lead East European counties to invigorate their efforts to join NATO.

Russia is invariably present at any negotiations between Ukraine and the United States as an invisible third party. It would hardly be correct to say that the Americans intend to turn Ukraine into a kind of counterbalance to Russia in Europe, because this is an unrealistic proposition. Maybe, by demonstrating its attention toward Ukraine, the United States wants to send a signal to certain forces in Russia — forces that advocate the political reintegration of the former USSR republics — that the United States will try to prevent this. To all appearances, over time, when Russia and Ukraine emerge from the protracted crisis, problems will arise between them and the United States is now considering options for averting them.

**Ukraine: Ties With U.S. Seen in View of Christopher Visit**

*AU2003132696 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 19 Mar 96 pp 1, 4*

[Report by Nadiya Bedrychuk: "There Are More Than Enough Topics for Discussion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Kiev expects the arrival of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. During the one-day visit, the guest will meet with President Leonid Kuchma, Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz, Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk, and Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko.

It is planned to discuss traditional problems of our cooperation — both military and economic. Warren Christopher will once again remind us about the Ukrainian-U.S.-Russian accords on nuclear weapons' withdrawal from Ukraine. Economic support for our reforms will also be touched upon.

It is for the third time over last month that Warren Christopher will be meeting with Leonid Kuchma. At first, the unscheduled and somewhat unexpected conversation in Finland (although, as they say, there is nothing accidental in the great politics). The next place of meeting was Washington, during the Ukrainian president's official visit. The third meeting — here in Kiev. As we could already see for ourselves, there are more than enough topics for discussion.

First, events on the CIS territory follow one another with such lightning speed that foreigners will hardly be bored visiting here even on a daily basis. The other reason is the West's vacillation about granting economic assistance to Ukraine.

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The United States repeatedly referred to its terms: We will only give you money after we become convinced that you are really proceeding along the road toward market transformations. Unfortunately, what is currently going on in Ukraine can in no way be associated with market reforms as viewed from America. That is why the assistance is insignificant.

Yet another nuance of today's meetings should be recalled. No matter how firmly closed the doors behind bilateral meetings between Ukraine and the United States meet are, there will always be a third participant there — Russia. Warren Christopher and Leonid Kuchma will hardly manage to evade the topic of denouncing the Belovezh accords or the question of Boris Yeltsin's future visit to Kiev. It is worth talking about this at least for the reason that Ukraine, Russia, and the United States have several joint accords, in particular in the military sphere. Apart from this, after Kiev, the Secretary of State will visit Prague, and then — Moscow. That is why Warren Christopher cannot fail to ask the opinion of Ukrainian politicians about the Ukrainian-Russian relations.

We will not, however, try to guess what the results of the visit will be. We meet more frequently and that is good. It is a confirmation of the fact that we have finally found a common language and move in the same direction.

## National Affairs

### Ukraine: Official: Becoming Nuclear-Free This Year Not Possible

*LD2003145796 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — "Ukraine physically cannot become nuclear-free by this year as was declared in U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's statement, and previously by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry," the secretary of Ukraine's National Security Council, Volodymyr Horbulin, noted when commenting to journalists on remarks by American officials regarding the schedule for Ukraine's nuclear disarmament.

The U.S. secretary of state stressed that Ukraine should become nuclear-free by this year in a statement for the mass media on 19 March ahead of his meeting with Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma. Previously U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry had noted that Ukraine should become a nuclear-free state by June-July 1996.

UNIAN has learned at the Ukrainian Defense Ministry that, in accordance with the trilateral statement by the Ukrainian, U.S. and Russian presidents of 14 January 1994, Ukraine pledged to ensure the elimination of all nuclear arms, including strategic offensive arms, located on its territory over seven years, which was also envisaged in the START-I Treaty.

### Ukraine: Ukraine Unable To Remove Nuclear Warheads by June

*LD2003203496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 20 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Ukraine will be unable to remove its nuclear warheads from its territory by June, according to secretary of Ukraine's National Security Council Vladimir Horbulin.

"We simply do not have the physical capabilities," he told reporters Wednesday.

He said that "we will definitely do this" in the future, but refused to give exact deadlines, citing government secrecy.

The removal of the warheads is taking place in accordance with a three-sided agreement between the presidents of Ukraine, Russia, and the United States from January 14, 1994. Ukraine receives fuel for its nuclear power stations as compensation.

There were roughly 1,300 intercontinental ballistics rocket warheads and over 600 warheads for winged air-to-surface rockets. According to unofficial Russian figures, over 300 strategic warheads remain in Ukraine. Over 1,000 have been removed to be scrapped. Russian and Ukrainian Defense Ministers Pavel Grachev and Valeriy Shmarov set up the timetable for removing the rest in Sochi last November. That timetable is now being disrupted.

Horbulin also said that the Russian Duma's resolutions practically denouncing the dissolution of the USSR caused Eastern and Central European countries to "correct" their policies.

"Ukraine will develop relations with NATO," he said, adding that a number of drills are to take place this year. "Representatives of all Western European countries, except France, have said many times that Ukraine is a vital factor in European security," Horbulin said.

### Ukraine: 'Toxic, Radioactive Substances' Found in Poltava

*AU2103101696 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 20 Mar 96 p 4*

[Report by Hryhoriy Hrya from Poltava Oblast: "They Have Gone Too Far in the Chemistry Department"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The modest department of chemistry at the Poltava Agricultural Institute became

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an object of study for representatives of the Civil Defense and Extraordinary Situations headquarters, of the oblast and city sanitary-epidemic stations, and of ecological safety and security service administrations. Very toxic and radioactive substances were revealed in a safe placed in the corridor of the department and in a box in the basement. The institute's staff could not say anything specific about their precise amount; nor was there an inventory of the substances. The safe was not sealed or put under guard. The contents of the metal box were last checked in 1956: At that time, arsenic sodium, potassium cyanide, and crystalline strychnine were mentioned as stored there. None of these substances could be found and nobody knows where that horrible stuff has gone. The half-decayed box only had 28 glass vessels with reagents, empty retorts, test tubes, and powders — all of these must be regarded as sources of chemical hazard. This is the commission's conclusion. The inspectors also stated that the presence of large quantities of highly toxic substances in the institute creates the threat of poisoning the staff and students of the educational establishment and also of the city population. Measures for destroying the poisons are now being taken.

**Ukraine: Communist Party To Initiate Similar Belovezh Legislation**

*LD2003172796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1411 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Mar 20 (Interfax - Ukraine) — The Russian State Duma's vote denouncing the Belovezh Accords will undoubtedly influence the tactics of Ukrainian left-wing forces, said Vladimir Gorbulin, the secretary of the Ukrainian president's National Security Council.

"The left-wing forces will make every effort to frustrate the adoption of the new constitution," he stated during a briefing in Kiev Wednesday.

He described the leftists' latest moves as "against the state."

Since January 1995, Ukraine's Communist Party has been collecting signatures in support of holding a special referendum on the basic provisions of the constitution: on the socialist orientation of Ukraine's social development, on the presidency, on the state symbols, on the status of the languages, and also on the attitude to the "voluntary union of the independent states of the former Soviet Union." Communist leaders announced that 3 million signatures had been collected by the beginning of March.

As reported earlier, Ukraine's Minister of Justice Sergey Golovatiy has proposed suing the Communist Party of Ukraine for initiating such a referendum. Ukraine's Prosecutor-General Grigoriy Vorsinov has instructed all of the local prosecutors to establish if the collection of signatures was legal.

Gorbulin said, however, that "there are no juridical reasons" for trying the organizers of the signature-collection campaign. "They may only be warned," he said.

"Competent organs have been instructed to draft proposals on amending the laws dealing with anti-state activity," he said.

**Ukraine: Kuchma Welcomes, Comments on Draft Constitution**

*LD2003201796 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1630 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The draft Ukrainian constitution, which was drawn up by the constitutional commission, takes into account the historic traditions and realities of Ukraine as well as European experiences, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma stressed at a special meeting of the Ukrainian Supreme Council during the presentation of the draft constitution. He said that it was expedient to give the draft constitution a first reading in parliament no later than in 10 day's time. He stressed that the draft defined new democratic standards in the field of law that conform to the European convention on human rights. The president said the cornerstone of the constitution was the declaration that Ukraine was a sovereign, independent, social and legally-based state and also the declaration that man was the state's highest social asset.

Kuchma considers that the fundamental provision of the constitution is the one on the division of power in Ukraine. In his words, the constitution did not provide for a body which could maintain formal power whereas it establishes the cooperation of checks and counterbalances between the branches of power. "To search through the draft for the most important power is like searching for a black cat in a darkened room when there is no cat," the Ukrainian president stressed. He also noted that the concept of "head of the executive power" had been omitted in the constitution since it declared that the executive power in Ukraine is held by a collegial leading body. According to Kuchma, the provisions on local self-government "conform" to world practice and the European Charter of Local self-government.

Kuchma stressed that work on the draft constitution was painstaking and tense, and it could not be said now that those who worked on it had "marked time". He is convinced that the signing of the constitutional

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treaty between the president and the Supreme Council, which included a clear timetable for adopting the basic law, helped to speed up the process of discussing the constitution.

The Ukrainian president stressed that at the moment one could not consider the draft constitution to be completely complete, emphasizing that he too had serious comments to make on the document and would insist that they be taken into account by the parliament.

**Ukraine: Moroz, Party Leader View Draft Constitution**

*WS2103130196 Lvov INFOBANK in English 1130 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — On March 20 at a special meeting at the Supreme Council a draft of the new Constitution of Ukraine was presented. Co-chairman of the Constitutional commission, chairman of the Supreme Council Oleksandr Moroz reported that he will do his best for the draft of the Constitution to be approved by the Parliament in May 1996. Although, in his opinion, this will be inhibited by the lack of definite parliamentary factions division. The Parliamentary leader thinks that the draft does not provide for the active participation of the subject and source of power, namely the people, in forming and influencing it. According to him, the draft of the law does not observe the principle of division of power, lacks an adequate balance between branches of power and provides for the bias towards the executive power.

As he informed the INFOBANK's correspondent, the leader of the Communist Party of Ukraine Petro Symonenko said that the draft will ensure the course towards capitalization of relations in society, curtail social and economic rights of citizens, eliminate government by the people, create legal conditions for unrestricted autocratic power of the President. He supported abolition of the Institute of President in Ukraine and in case of its timely retaining to limit powers of the head of state to representative functions.

People's deputy Volodymyr Stretovych thinks that the draft of the Constitution should be amended by the article entitling the Cabinet of Ministers to put forth legislative initiatives.

**Ukraine: Parliament Approves First Reading of Crimean Constitution**

*LD2103110296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1049 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[By Mikhail Melnik and Raisa Stetsyura]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — The Ukrainian parliament on Thursday approved the first reading of a Crimean Constitution upon excluding 20 articles out of 136 from it. In the opinion of Ukrainian MPs [members of parliament], the excluded articles, which concern, in particular, the symbols, property and language, run counter to Ukrainian legislation.

The Ukrainian MPs have postponed the discussion of an article concerning Crimean citizenship and status for the second reading. The lawmakers have not yet made up their mind as to the wording of the title of the Constitution: either a "Republic of Crimea" or an "Autonomous Republic of Crimea".

The Crimean deputies, who attended the plenary meeting of the Ukrainian parliament, agreed with amendments and critical remarks. Incidentally, they insisted that a Crimean Constitution be endorsed before a Ukrainian one is adopted.

Previously the Crimean MPs demanded that Ukraine approve a Crimean Constitution before April 1. Otherwise, they said they would conduct a referendum on the issue.

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## Belarus

### Belarus: Lukashenka Only CIS Leader 'Liking' Duma Decree

*MM2003210596 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1*

[Report by Oleg Stepanenko: "Alyaksandr Lukashenka: 'State Duma Decision Could Accelerate Unification Process'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk — It appears that the only president in the CIS who has not lost his head nor collapsed in a state of terror and hysteria following the State Duma's decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya agreements and acknowledge the will of the people expressed in the all-union referendum is Alyaksandr Lukashenka. At a conference of top officials from the republic, which discussed questions of Belarusian-Russian integration, he stressed that the State Duma's decision could accelerate the process of Belarusian and Russian unity, which was initiated, he said, by the political will of the presidents of those states.

Lukashenka noted that the unification of peoples on an equal, civilized basis was dictated by the times and is impossible to resist. It is important now to unite all reasonable forces in Belarus and Russia who are prepared, as he put it, to help the two presidents correct the mistakes of the past.

Lukashenka recommended that the republic Supreme Council examine at a plenary session the question of Belarusian and Russian integration in the context of the decree adopted by the State Duma and expressed his willingness to attend the session if the Belarusian parliament supported his proposal.

Earlier he had been asked by television how he regarded the Russian State Duma's decision. Alyaksandr Grigoryevich [Lukashenka] said: "How can someone who was opposed to the Belovezhskaya agreements from the outset regard this? I have not changed my position since that time." And he added that he sees the reestablishment of the union state as the only reasonable and inevitable path to take.

In short, the State Duma's decision clearly identified both the supporters and the opponents of the reunification of the state destroyed by the "democrats". The people can now see for themselves who is who.

The Communists' parliamentary faction has demanded that the Supreme Soviet consider at its session the question whether the Belovezhskaya agreements should be deemed a political error. The session's plenary meeting at which, it is now clear, the question of denouncing the illegal Belovezhskaya conspiracy will be raised is to take place in the very near future.

### Belarus: Minsk: 1991 Belovezh Accords Placed on SupSov Agenda

*WS2103084496 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The first session of the 13th Belarusian Supreme Soviet is continuing its work. Despite expectations, the deputies began their week neither with the discussion of the denouncement of the Belovezh agreements or with the discussion of the national budget, but with issues pertaining to the deputies' immunity. Tenets of this draft law addressing the institution of criminal proceedings against deputies and privileges of deputies of various levels caused hot disputes. These problems were discussed during the entire morning session.

In the second half of the day, a proposal to include the issue on further integration with Russia on the Supreme Soviet agenda triggered hot discussions. The majority of people's deputies supported this proposal and the issue was placed on the session's agenda.

### Belarus: Premier Briefs Press on Agreements With Russia

*WS2103084596 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0810 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] During the March 19 government news conference, Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir informed reporters that the Cabinet of Ministers issued an implementing enactment on the Belarusian-Russian agreement on the mutual settlement of financial claims. The enactment envisages that Belarusian economic entities that have foreign currency resources on the frozen accounts in the USSR Vneshekonombank and debts for energy resources as of January 1 1996 will be able to pay them off by special government promissory notes. In addition, special promissory notes will be used for the repayment of enterprises' debts on payments to the Republican and local budgets as of April 1 1996. The prime minister said that around $70-80 million will be unfrozen in the USSR Vneshekonombank.

In Mr. Chyhir's opinion, this enactment "will radically reduce non-payments in the Belarusian economy." As for the other economic entities that had foreign currency accounts in the USSR Vneshekonombank, the government, according to the prime minister, cannot come to aid for the present and release these accounts.

The Cabinet of Ministers is working on another enactment ensuing from the agreement signed by the Belarusian and Russian presidents. This document envisages the cancellation of the indebtedness of the organizations financed from the state budget as of February 1 1996.

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In the prime minister's opinion, the Belarusian-Russian agreement on the mutual cancellation of debts will allow the government to improve financial discipline in the economy, to reduce debts within the country, to pay off the national debt for Russian fuel and energy resources. Mr. Chyhir holds that an excellent basis will be created for the replenishment of enterprises' working capital and, subsequently, for their effective functioning.

**Belarus: Lukashenka on Relations With Kaliningrad, Poland**

*WS1903104096 Minsk BTK Television Network in Belarusian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 96*

[Statement by Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka at a meeting with Kaliningrad Oblast Administration Head Yuriy Matochkin; in Minsk on 14 March on the "Rezanans" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Your arrival and visit to the Republic of Belarus should put an end to rumors and misunderstanding, as well as end attempts to build some sort of policy on allegations that we have developed concepts aimed at infringing on the interests of third and other parties. Nothing of the kind. We have cooperated [with Kaliningrad Oblast] for a long time. I have checked the 1995 figures; our trade turnover was around 45 million [currency not specified]. You know, our trade turnover with many states is lower. Therefore, we can only talk about one thing — improving our cooperation. We are going to build our relations in a way which we find appropriate.

We do not infringe on the interests of Poland or Lithuania, but we would like our interests to be respected. If, for instance, cooperation between Belarus and Kaliningrad Oblast meets the interests of Poland or Lithuania, I believe those countries will support our cooperation trends. Moreover, we have perfect relations with Lithuania; we have very good relations with the Polish Republic. I have never met Aleksander Kwasniewski; our meeting will be held literally within a couple of days. I think that this person, a pragmatist who came to power in Poland, will support our good relations — of course, in such a way as not to hurt the interests of either Lithuania or Poland. This is out of the question. I am not saying this to clear myself. I want people to understand that we are not going to build any blocs or unions to the detriment of other states.

On the eve of our meeting, I studied the history of our relations — not only economic, but also political ones. I arrived at the following conclusion: God help us restore what we had in the past. Then we will achieve even better results and brilliant indicators.

Once, when I was holding talks with President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, I joked: why continue having problems with Kaliningrad Oblast? Let us attach it to Belarus. He did not understand the joke and said: The public will not accept this. I pointed out: It will be enough if people in Kaliningrad Oblast accept it. You may remember that there were projects in Soviet times envisioning that Belarus should very closely cooperate with Kaliningrad Oblast, treating it like its own oblast. In this way Kaliningrad Oblast would not have felt detached from the mainland. Such projects were developed, and they were correct.

I believe the issue of attachment or unification is not a primary issue. It will be enough for us to have very close relations with Kaliningrad Oblast, which will be advantageous both for you and for us. It is not only in light of the [Kaliningrad] port. I have been presented with a three-page list of basic products which Belarus delivers to Kaliningrad and which you deliver to us. I would like to remind you once again that we have a trade turnover of 45 million. The list includes pulp, natural gas, coke, and fish which we lack in Belarus, and in the processing of which Belarus is ready to cooperate.

The area for making progress is vast. I would like you to treat as a joke my proposal to attach Kaliningrad Oblast to Belarus. At the same time, we would like the Russian people and the 75,000 Belarusians living in Kaliningrad Oblast not to feel that they are far from us and forsaken.

I think that this bridge between mainland Russia and Kaliningrad Oblast — the bridge called Belarus — should play the role of a real bridge for the 1 million people who currently live in the oblast. At the same time, the special zone status of your oblast — I have read the appropriate Russian Federation law — is extremely advantageous for Belarus.

**Belarus: Prime Minister on Disagreements With IMF**

*WS2003145596 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir, who has held consultations with IMF representatives, the principal disagreements between Belarus and the IMF come to two issues: First, Belarus has not decreased the national currency rate and has introduced an obligatory 10 percent fee at the interbank stock exchange. As is known, customs duties are used in international practice, but if customs duties are to be introduced by Belarus, the agreements signed with Russia would place Belarus in an unfavorable position. Due to this, Belarus had to take such a step [not specified] which today is perceived ambiguously. Prime Minister Chyhir also said that due to these agreements the problem of debts to Russia has been eliminated.

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## Moldova

### Moldova: Snegur Shares Yeltsin's Position on Russian Duma Decision

*AU2003184996 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1950 GMT 19 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, March 19 (INFOTAG) — The Moldovan President Mircea Snegur fully shares the position of his Russian colleague, Boris Yeltsin, with regard to the State Duma's decision of March 15 on denouncing the Belovezh Accords.

As was reported earlier, on the initiative of the Russian Communist Party, the Duma has recognized as null and void the 1991 Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), which document, in its turn, canceled the 1922 law on establishing the USSR. The Duma has also voted for confirming the legal force of the 1991 referendum on the USSR preservation.

Mircea Snegur sent a telegram to Boris Yeltsin and informed him that the Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs had stood up with an official statement stressing that the Duma's resolution is aimed at undermining the democratic transformations in new independent states, and may damage the economic cooperation between our countries.

"The Moldovan leadership and myself are supporting your course on conducting large-scale reforms in Russia, on democratization of the society. Similar transformations are taking place in Moldova. We believe this to be the only right way able to bring our nations in line with civilized countries of the world, and we believe there exists no return to the communist past where the reactionary forces are seeking to bring us to," the telegram reads.

Mircea Snegur has reaffirmed Moldova's resolution to develop and deepen the equal-right, all-embracing cooperation with the Russian Federation for the good of two nations.

### Moldova: Snegur Will Attend Emergency CIS Summit on Duma Resolution

*LD2003134196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1107 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, Mar 20 (Interfax) — Moldovan President Mircea Snegur will attend the emergency CIS summit proposed by Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze in light of the Duma resolution practically denouncing the 1991 accords dissolving the USSR, if such a summit takes place, Snegur told Interfax Wednesday.

### Moldova: Constitutional Court To Examine Defense Minister Dismissal

*AU2003182796 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2045 GMT 18 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, 18/03/1996 (BASA-press) — The Moldovan Government and a group of Agrarian and Socialist deputies appealed to the Constitutional Court (CC) on President's dismissal of the Defense Minister. Pavel Barbalat, CC chairman, told BASA that, according to the procedure, CC members will first examine the appeal for three days. Then, the Court will meet to give its resolution.

The deputies' appeal was signed by Victor Cecan, PDAM [Democratic Agrarian Party of Moldova] deputy and head of the juridical commission, Aleksandr Nemtsov and Mihail Sidorov, both from the Socialist Unity.

Contacted by BASA, Victor Cecan confirmed that the deputies appealed to the CC "concerning the constitutionality of some aspects of the President's dismissal of the Defense Minister." He said he does not know the content of the government appeal.

On March 16, Moldovan Parliament took note of the government appeal to the CC on constitutionality of the presidential decree dismissing the Defense Minister and required the CC to urgently examine this appeal. The Parliament recommended Snegur to set a moratorium on the decree until the CC makes the ruling.

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## Azerbaijan

### Azerbaijan: Parliament Decision on Duma Resolution Detailed

*NC2103050896 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1900 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[Decision announced by the Azerbaijani National Assembly on 19 March on the Russian State Duma's denunciation of the agreement on the formation of the CIS and recognition of the results of the referendum on the preservation of the "USSR" — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Azerbaijani National Assembly hereby decides:

The statement setting out the position of the Azerbaijani National Assembly regarding the Russian State Duma's 15 March decisions on renouncing the agreement on the formation of the CIS and recognizing the results of the 17 March 1991 referendum on the preservation of the USSR has been adopted.

[signed] Rasul Guliyev, chairman of the Azerbaijani National Assembly

[dated] Baku, 19 March 1996

The [National Assembly's] statement says:

The Russian State Duma adopted resolutions on 15 March denouncing the agreement concluded by the presidents of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine on the formation of the CIS and recognizing the 17 March 1991 referendum on the preservation of the USSR. In connection with this issue the Azerbaijani National Assembly, expressing the will of the Azerbaijani people, announces the following and states that if the Russian State Duma does not act appropriately in adopting decisions, and adopts similar decisions in future, then Azerbaijan's nonparticipation in CIS organs, including the Interparliamentary Assembly, will be considered.

The Azerbaijani National Assembly fully endorses and supports Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev's statements concerning the decisions adopted by the Russian State Duma. It expresses its solidarity with all those deputies who voted against this decision by the Russian State Duma and believes that Russia's progress rests in free and democratic development. The idea of and efforts for the forcible reunification of the former USSR's peoples are nothing short of political adventurism and subversion.

The Azerbaijani people are resolutely against a return to the past and against decisions and efforts targeting the sovereignty of CIS countries and declare that, according to its constitution, Azerbaijan's independence and sovereignty are inviolable, eternal, and irreversible.

This statement was adopted by the 19 March decision of the Azerbaijani National Assembly.

## Georgia

### Georgia: Turkmen President Arrives To Discuss Gas Exports

*LD2003161996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1107 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, Mar 20 (INTERFAX) — Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov arrived in the Georgian capital on a visit on Wednesday to discuss Georgia's debts for Turkmen gas supplies.

During his one-day official visit to Tbilisi he intends to discuss, among other things, the postponement of Georgia's payments for Turkmen gas supplies, Niyazov said in an interview with Georgian television on the eve of the visit.

"As far as debt deferment is concerned, I think we will most likely reach an agreement and provide the population of the republic and the whole of Georgia with natural gas," he said.

"We understand that during the transition period in the newly independent states we should not be too tough on the question of debt payment," Niyazov said.

He stressed that Ashgabat "takes into account the problems of each state, especially those of Georgia, which is now going through a most complicated period of internal conflict."

The Turkmen president is scheduled to have a one-on-one meeting March 20 with Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. Later in the day, Turkmen government leaders will meet with Georgian State Minister Nikolay Lekishvili.

The program of the visit also includes talks between the foreign ministers and parliament speakers of the two countries.

Niyazov and Shevardnadze are expected to sign a package of agreements on economic, transportation, power engineering and investment cooperation.

Late on Wednesday, Niyazov and his delegation will fly home.

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**Georgia: Results of Shevardnadze's Visit to Moscow Outlined**

*MM2003165796 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 3*

[Unattributed report: "Russia-Georgia: Developing Partnership"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first official visit in history by the president of independent Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, to Moscow ended yesterday.

With the Russian leaders he discussed a wide range of questions relating to bilateral relations, the settlement of the conflicts in the Caucasus, and international issues. Time has shown that the treaty on friendship, good-neighborliness, and cooperation signed in February 1994 during President Boris Yeltsin's trip to Georgia is operating and bearing good fruit.

After the meeting with E. Shevardnadze, which took place one on one, Boris Yeltsin noted that they had returned "to a long-standing plan — gathering in Vladikavkaz and discussing the situation in the region." "We did not know whether to meet with only the leaders of the Russian North Caucasus republics or not," the president continued. "Shevardnadze persuaded me to meet with the Greater Caucasus since their problems are common ones."

During the talks there could not fail to be a discussion of the State Duma decision on the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements which the Georgian president resolutely denounced. He suggested taking emergency measures in this connection and in particular holding an extraordinary meeting of the CIS leaders to discuss the situation which has arisen. Boris Yeltsin gave his agreement to take part in such a meeting "anywhere" but most conveniently in Moscow since the State Duma's stupid and harmful decision was adopted in the Russian capital.

Eduard Shevardnadze termed entirely acceptable the principles on whose basis Russia and three other CIS states intend to sign a treaty on in-depth integration. In turn Boris Yeltsin stated that this treaty between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan will be open to other countries and as soon as Georgia is ready it will also be able to sign it.

After the talks in the Kremlin between the heads of the two states, a joint Russian-Georgian declaration was signed. In Boris Yeltsin's estimation in bilateral relations and on international issues the sides' positions coincide in full or are identical. Eduard Shevardnadze confirmed that there was not a single question on which mutual understanding was not reached.

**Georgia: Tbilisi To Be More 'Cautious' in Dealing With CIS**

*LD1503190696 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1800 GMT 15 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In connection with the Russian State Duma's resolution [denouncing the Belovezh agreement], a Matsne news program correspondent asked Chairman of the Georgian Parliament Zurab Zhvania to comment on it, who said:

The resolution of the State Duma of the Russian Federal Assembly on denouncing the Belovezh agreement will by no means achieve any result from the point of view of the restoration of the Soviet Union.

The Georgian people, like the other peoples of the former Soviet Union, have once and for all expressed their firm will to build an independent and fully sovereign state. No one on the earth can change this decision.

I, personally, apprehend today's decision by the State Duma of the Russian Federal Assembly as questioning the existence of the Commonwealth of Independent States by members of the Russian State Duma.

A course like this will only enhance the cautious approach of the Georgian Parliament towards the integration processes within the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States. I do not think that decisions like this could promote stability in Russia proper.

**Georgia: Abkhaz Leader Declares Support for Restoration of USSR**

*LD1903170796 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1240 GMT 19 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Sukhumi, 19 [March] — The so-called president of Abkhazia, Vladislav Ardzinba, has said in connection with the decision adopted by the Russian State Duma on the revocation of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement that Abkhazia and the Abkhaz people were against the break-up of the Soviet Union and that the Abkhaz people were doing everything in their power to keep it.

As for the prospects of restoring the Soviet Union, Ardzinba said that Abkhazia would support the restoration of the USSR provided this did not mean Abkhazia's return within Georgia.

In the words of the Abkhaz separatist leader, he will not allow anyone to use the Abkhaz issue for getting Georgia's consent for the restoration of the USSR.

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**Georgia: Abkhaz Communists Ready for 'Armed Coup' in Russia**

*LD2003200696 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Georgian 1530 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Sukhumi — An informed source reports from Sukhumi that Abkhazian Communists are ready to participate in an armed coup in Russia. Communist leaders of the so-called Abkhazian Republic have set up a mobile detachment which is armed to the teeth. The unit will cross the Russian-Georgian border at the first call and help the battalions of rebels in Sochi to establish a communist-type order in Krasnodar Territory.

In Gudauta, the mobilization is being supervised by Konstantin Ozgan and Sayid Tarkil, members of the former Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The weapons kept by them will immediately be handed to Russian Communists.

In the meantime, lists of those people who supported the breakup of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party are being compiled secretly in the impostor republic [of Abkhazia].

**Georgia: Abkhazia: Russians Back 'Single and Mighty Soviet State'**

*LD2003151796 Tbilisi SAKINFORM in Russian 1240 GMT 20 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] [no dateline as received] The Russian community in Abkhazia, which includes the citizens of Russian nationality living in the region, has circulated a statement saying they support the decision of the Russian State Duma on the revocation of the Belovezh agreements. We support the restoration of a single and mighty Soviet state within the borders of the former USSR, the statement says.

**Georgia: S. Ossetian Parliament Rejects Incorporation Into Georgia**

*LD1603130096 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1115 GMT 16 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 16 Mar — The People's Nikhas, the parliament of the so-called South Ossetian republic, has rejected a protocol on the future status of South Ossetia signed in Moscow. The protocol envisaged South Ossetia's incorporation into Georgia with the status of an autonomous republic.

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## Estonia

### Estonia: Foreign Minister Views Christopher's Prague Remarks on NATO

*WS2103123596 Tallinn BNS in English 1100 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Mar 21, BNS — Safeguarding the security of the Baltic states is one of the priorities of the United States' and NATO's security policy, Estonian Foreign Minister Siim Kallas told BNS.

Kallas said upon his return from a meeting of Central and East European countries' foreign ministers with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Prague on Wednesday the West and the United States were giving a lot of attention to supporting the security of the Baltic states. "Safeguarding the security of the Baltic states is one of the pivotal issues of the entire security architecture," the foreign minister declared.

"Looking back to the events on the eve of World War II when the Baltics were left on their own, I can safely say I don't see such danger now," Kallas said.

Christopher said Wednesday in Prague NATO expansion into the former Soviet bloc was inevitable and advised Russia not to try to reverse history. "NATO enlargement is on track and it will happen," the ASSOCIATED PRESS quoted Christopher as saying.

Kallas said the U.S. secretary of state emphasized he saw it as very important that Russia shouldn't endanger the independence of any state.

The foreign minister asked Christopher about security guarantees for those states that weren't among the first new recruits to the Western defense alliance.

Christopher replied the entry of some states to NATO ahead of others would bring additional security guarantees for the remaining aspirants. "Those who come first will have an obligation to ensure their membership keeps the door open for others," he said.

Christopher reaffirmed that the enlargement of NATO would begin with those candidates who were ready to assume the obligations arising from membership.

He said NATO would decide on the next step in December. "The enlargement will naturally begin with the strongest candidates for membership," he noted.

Estonia, like its Baltic neighbors of Latvia and Lithuania, has announced it's seeking to be included in the first wave of new members. NATO's attitude is sceptical, however. The military commanders of the alliance oppose membership for any country which does not border another member, REUTERS said Wednesday.

The strategic importance to Russia of the Baltic states makes them unlikely to gain entry in the foreseeable future to NATO, REUTERS said. European Union membership will bring far less opposition from both Moscow and the West. Diplomats will hope economic carrots and special deals with Russia will eventually persuade them to lower their sights, the news agency said.

### Estonia: Kallas: Relations With Russia at 'Standstill'

*LD2103112496 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1000 GMT 21 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Siim Kallas admitted today that Estonia's relations with Russia are at a standstill and blockaded. Yesterday the Russian State Duma, in its statement to the Russian Government, accused the Estonian Riigikogu of interference in Russian domestic affairs and supporting terrorism. This was in response to a message of condolences to Dzhokhar Dudayev from a group of our Riigikogu members, as well as in response to the Estonian parliament's aggressive Russophobia and its political course.

Kallas called the statement a typical example of a propaganda war. It had previously criticized the Riigikogu statement on a Chechen commander's death.

When asked what Estonia should do to improve relations with Russia, Kallas answered with a question: Why do we have to do something all the time?

According to the Estonian foreign minister, Russia expects Estonia to grant citizenship to the entire Russian-speaking population, announce it has no aspirations toward NATO, introduce visa-freedom with Russia, and conclude a broad-based confederation agreement. Then relations would definitely improve, but would there still be an independent state of Estonia? According to Kallas, the independence of the Baltic states, and Estonia in particular, serves as the biggest thorn in Russia's side.

In April Siim Kallas is due to meet Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov.

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